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SAIVISM IN ANCIENT BIHAR

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ŚAIVISM IN ANCIENT BIHAR

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Department of History
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Late Akhouri Rameshwar Prasad

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Dedicated

To the sacred memory

of my father

Late Dr. Akhouri Rameshwar Prasad

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FOREWORD

Śaivism or the worship of Śiva, the Great God, Mahādeva, has been extremely popular in India from at least as early as the Indus Valley peried in the 3rd millennium B. C. There has been no dearth of standard and authentic works from the pen of eminent scholars dealing with the early history and spread of Śaivism in India; but there is hardly any one worth the name dealing exclusively with the history and development of Śaivism in ancient Bihar. It is to the credit of Dr. (Mrs.) Gayatri Akhouri that she chose this subject for her thesis and based her study on both the literary and archaeological material, thereby filling up a long-felt void in the study of the subject. She has acquitted herself creditably well in collecting and analysing her material for the study of the nature, evolution and development of Śaivism in Bihar since early times. She has presented a good account of the temples and sculptures of Śiva in Bihar. She has also given a critical and analytical study of the inscriptions of Bihar, deriving very valuable informations with regard to the spread of Śaivism in the state. The work has been copiously illustrated, enhancing its utility and effectiveness. The present work, which embodies in the main the doctoral dissertation (*Śaivism in Ancient Bihar*) of Dr. (Mrs) Gayatri Akhouri, approved by the University of Patna for the Ph. D. degree in 1984, is thus a detailed and systematic account of the early history and development of Śaivism in Bihar. The authoress deserves congratulation and encouragement for having produced such a nice work. And it is earnestly hoped that the present work of Dr. (Mrs.) Akhouri will be well received both by the scholars and the researchers.

Patna : 2nd October, 1987

Bhagwant Sahai
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PREFACE

The present work "Śaivism in Ancient Bihar", embodies in the main the thesis approved for the degree of Ph. D. by the University of Patna in 1984. It presents an in-depth study of Śaivism in Bihar mainly in their archaeological perspective.

In the first place I have to remember my late father Dr. Akhouri Rameshwar Prasad to whose sacred memory this book is dedicated. It is my proud privilege to express my sincerest gratitude and respect to my supervisor, Professor Bhagwant Sahai, M. A., Ph. D. University Professor and Head of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology, Patna University, Patna whose constant guidance, able supervision and sympathetic encouragement made it possible for me to give the work the present form. For the inspiration, encouragement and guidance I will ever remain grateful to my uncle Sri Akhouri Parmeshwar Prasad, Retired Chief Engineer, Irrigation Deptt., Bihar, who always evinced keen interest in this work of mine and offered valuable suggestions from time to time. My thanks are also due to Dr. S M. Devi, M.A., Ph. D., and Dr. M.C.P. Shrivastava, M.A., Ph. D. University Professors, Dr. S. N. Sahay, M.A , Ph. D., Reader and Dr. B. K. Jamuar, M. A., Ph. D., Lecturer, Deptt. of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology, Patna University, Patna for their kind help and valuable suggestions.

I am highly grateful to my brother-in-law Dr. Chitta Ranjan Prasad Sinha, Asstt. Director, K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna who extended all possible help to me in giving final form to the present work. I also owe my deep sense of gratitude to my husband Sri Manoranjan Prasad Sinha, a member of the Indian Administrative Service for constant encouragement and co-operation, without which it would have been practically impossible for me to accomplish the task. My thanks are also due to Sri Rajendra Prasad for preparing the Index.

At the end, I have also to place on record my thanks to all those great savants whose writings I have utilised in the preparation of this work.

Gayatri Akhouri

Patna
2nd October, 1987.

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TRANSLITERATION CHART

a	अ	ṛ	ऋ	anusvāra	ं	ṁ
ā	आ	e	ए	visarga	ः	ḥ
i	इ	ai	ऐ			
ī	ई	o	ओ			
u	उ	au	औ			
ū	ऊ					

k	क्	ch	च्	ṭ	ट्	t	त्
kh	ख्	chh	छ्	ṭh	ठ्	th	थ्
g	ग्	j	ज्	ḍ	ड्	d	द्
gh	घ्	jh	झ्	ḍh	ढ	dh	ध्
ṅ	ङ्	n		ṇ	ण्	n	न्
p	प्	y	य्	ś	श्	kṣ	क्ष्
ph	फ्	r	र्	ṣ	ष्	tra	त्र्
b	ब्	l	ल्	s	स्	jñ	ज्ञ्
bh	भ्	v	व्	ḥ	ह्		
m	म्						

Common words and modern names are usually written without diacritical marks.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ASI	*Archaeological Survey of India.*
ASI-AR	*Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report.*
ASR	*Archaeological Survey of India, Cunningham's Report.*
BMC	*The Coins of the Greek and Scythic Kings of Bactria and India in the British Museum.*
CII	*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.*
DHI	*Development of Hindu Iconography.*
EI	*Epigraphia Indica.*
EHI	*Elements of Hindu Iconography.*
EISMS	*Eastern Indian School of Medieval Sculpture.*
GSO	*Gaekwad Oriental Series.*
IA	*Indian Antiquary.*
IBBSDM	*Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum.*
IHQ	*Indian Historical Quarterly*
IMC	*Indian Museum Catalogue.*
JASB	*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.*
JBBRAS	*Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.*
JBORS	*Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, Patna.*
JBPP	*Journal of the Bihar Puravid Parishad.*
JISOA	*Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art.*
JNSI	*Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.*
JUPHS	*Journal of the U. P. Historical Society.*

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MASI	*Memoir of the Archaeological Survey of India.*
PMC	*Catalogue of Coins of the Punjab Museum, Lahore.*
PIHC	*Proceedings of the Indian History Congress.*
P/pp	page/pages.
Pl/Pls	Plate/Plates
PMCA	*Patna Museum Catalogue of Antiquities.*
Pt/Pts	Part/Parts
Ram	*Rāmāyana.*
Rv	*Ṛg-Veda.*
Vol/Vols	Volume/Volumes

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6 Umā-Maheśvara, Rajgir, Nalanda
7 Kalyānasundara-murtti of Siva, Gaya
8 Sadyojāta, Deptt. of Ancient Indian History & Arch., P. U.
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29 Kārttikeyani, Kanalgaon, Bhagalpur
30 Kārttikeyani, Antichak, Bhagalpur

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INTRODUCTION

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Bihar is one of the major states of Indian Union lying between 21·58° north and 51·31° north latitudes and 83·20° east and 88·32° east; longitudes. The state is bounded on the north by the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal, on the east by West Bengal, on the west by Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh and on the south by Orissa.

The state of Bihar, which has played a vital role in the political history of India since very early times, has been an important centre of civilisation since very remote past. Religion has had been playing a very significant role in the life of mankind since very early times. In India, as early as the third millennium B. C., when a highly rich civilisation flourished in the valley of river Indus, full-fledged religion and religious practices had already come into existence. The great Mother Goddess was the prominent deity whose worship was very common in ancient times in all countries from Persia to the Aegean coasts. The cult found a fruitful soil in India and out of it developed the worship of Śakti with all its elaborate rites. Besides, the three faced male god, recognised as the prototype of the historic Śiva, was also worshipped and so was worshipped the phallic emblem—Śiva in *Liṅga* form. However, we do not have any evidence of the spread of Śaivism in so remote a past in the state of Bihar. Later on, the Ṛgvedic Aryans worshipped a large number of deities, mostly the personifications of the natural phenomena, classified as the terrestrial, the atmospheric and the heavenly gods. However, in the later Vedic period, Rudra (a form of the later day Śiva) and Viṣṇu shared universal veneration and they

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are still dominant in Hinduism, Thus, gradually the number of the deities went on increasing in course of the passage of time. Of all the deities Śiva like Viṣṇu is regarded as a very important god,rather the most important god. There is hardly any place in the country where we do not come across a Śiva *liṅga* worshipped in a shrine or in a temple. The Hindu masses of Bihar worshipped mostly Śiva along with other deities. But Śiva is a lovable and benevolent god for them. No doubt, the competent authorities of the subject have directed their attention to the writing of the history of religion concerning the well-known and major deities like Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śakti, etc. But though there have been numerous and standard works from the pen of the competent authors on Śaivism in the country in particular, there have been none devoted exclusively to the detailed study of the history of Śaivism in ancient Bihar.

There are, however, certain works which throw some light with regard to the study of Śaivism in Bihar in ancient times. In this context, particular mention may be made of (1) *Bihar Through the Ages* edited by R. R. Diwakar, the former Governor of Bihar, Calcutta; 1959, (2) *Comprehensive History of Bihar* Vol. I edited by B. P. Sinha and published by the K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna, 1975, (3) *Śaivamata* by Yaduvanshi, Patna 1955, (4) *Śaivism Through the Ages* by R. K. Siddhantashastree, New Delhi, 1974, (5) *Early Indian Religions* by P. Banerjee, Delhi, 1973, etc.

R. R. Diwakar's *Bihar Through the Ages* is a book dealing mainly with the history of Bihar, not only of the ancient period but also of the mediaeval and modern periods taking into account all the aspects of the history of Bihar-political, social, etc., and religion of Bihar, more particularly Śaivism in Bihar, has been dealt with rather very scantly in a few chapters only. B. P. Sinha's *Comprehensive History of Bihar* no doubt deals with the ancient period in both the parts of the first volume. But this work also deals with all aspects of history; political, social, etc. like the book by R. R. Diwakar. These two books have, therefore, dealt with Śaivism in Bihar in a most perfunctory manner. *Śaivamata* by Yaduvanshi, *History of*

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Śaivism by P. Jash and *Śaivism Through the Ages* by R. K. Śiddhantashastree are no doubt works dealing with Śaivism; but their works discuss Śaivism taking whole of the country into consideration, and they are not devoted solely to the study of Śaivism in Bihar. As such the spread of Śaivism in Bihar has been referred to in these works here and there in a very perfunctory way. P. Banerjee's *Early Indian Religions* discuss the history of a number of religious practices in the country. Likewise, the study of Śaivism formed a part of the book and there is nothing with regard to the study of Śaivism in Bihar. Therefore, a detailed study of Śaivism in Bihar in ancient times has been taken up with a view to filling up the gap in our knowledge of the spread of Śaivism in Bihar, which has not been treated in detail by the previous authors on the subject. For the study of Śaivism in Bihar reliance has naturally been placed on both the literary and archaeological sources for both together can afford a judicious picture of the prevalence of Śaivism in ancient times in the state of Bihar.

The work has been divided into five chapters with an introduction in the beginning and a conclusion at the end. Chapter I deals with the origin and development of Śaivism in India in general and Bihar in particular as revealed from the religious and non-religious literature of the country. Unfortunately there has been hardly any text dealing in particular the position of Śaivism in Bihar. Works in general like the Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas, the Epics and the Purāṇas have to be taken into account for reconstructing the state of Śaivism in Bihar. Works like Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* and the account of Megasthenes have also been referred to in this chapter. Chapter II takes into account the representations of the god Śiva and his emblems on the coins and seals of the different periods, and interprets the legend engraved on them, while chapter III discusses in detail the various interesting references pertaining to Śiva and the cult of the god as embodied in the inscriptions of Bihar. Chapter IV deals with the temples of Śiva as found in different parts of the state. Since religion cannot be thought of separate from the temples which are the houses of the gods, Śaiva temples of Bihar have been discussed fully in this

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chapter. Chapter V discusses the numerous representative sculptures of the god as obtained from different parts of the state.

Material for the study of the Śaivism in Bihar in ancient times are not inconsiderable and they are of two distinct kinds : (1) literary and (2) archaeological. Among the religious works throwing light with regard to the study of Śaivism in Bihar, the Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas, the Upaniṣads, the Gṛhyasūtras, the Epics and the Purāṇas have been taken into account. No doubt Śiva is alien to the Ṛgveda, but there are important references to the Vedic god Rudra who in due course merges with the historic Śiva. Śiva, as a matter of fact, partakes of certain traits of the Vedic Rudra. The Upaniṣads and the Brāhmaṇas contain some popular names of lord Śiva. The texts clearly suggest that the religious outlook of the Hindus had undergone a great transformation and Śiva in due course gained prominence. The Epics and the Purāṇas are also invaluable for the study of Śaivism in ancient period. During the period of the Epics, Śiva became a prominent deity and accounts for good number of space in almost all the works. There is at least one *Purāṇa*, that is *Śiva Mahā Purāṇa*, which has been named after the god. Another *Purāṇa*, the *Liṅga Purāṇa*, is named after the phallic emblem of the god. Likewise, the *Skanda Purāṇa* has been named after the son Skanda Kārttikeya. Other Purāṇas alse contain very important references having significant bearing on the worship of Śiva in ancient time. Certain non-religious works as well contain important references to the origin and dovelopment of Śaivism in Bihar. Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* and Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* definitely suggest the worship of the god Śiva in the Maurya and Śuṅga periods. Varāhamihira's *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* furnishes some important details about the preparation of the images of Śiva. Kālidāsa has immortalised lord Śiva in his classical work, the *Kumārasaṁbhava*. His other works like the *Raghuvaṁśa* and the *Meghadūta* have also very important references to Śiva. Thus, several literature have also been consulted.

It is, however, by no means easy to determine the dates of the various texts containing references to the origin and development

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of Śaivism in ancient times. Some of them, however, do not pose any serious difficulty, while opinions vary about others. Thus, the scholars are not unanimous about the date of the *Ṛgveda*. B, G. Tilak is of opinion that the *Ṛgvedic hymns* were composed at least 4000 years before Christ. The Vedic poetry and civilization may, with some amount of reasonableness, go back to about the 16th century B. C. The entire Sūtra literature is supposed to have been composed in between 600 B. C. and 200 B. C. and as such, the Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣadas are to be placed before 600 B. C.

The *Rāmāyṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* are of vital. importance for the study of Śaivism in ancient times. According to Macdonell, the kernel of the *Rāmāyaṇa* was composed before 500 B. C., while the more recent portions were probably not added till the 2nd century B. C. and later.[1] Much controversy has been raging about the date of the other Epic, the *Mahābhārata*. Macdonell has postulated three stages of its development.[2] The beginning, growth, revision and interpolation of this tremendous compilation are to be ascribed roughly to the long interval between the 5th century B. C. and 400 A. D. The epigraphic and other pieces of evidences establish it clearly that the *Mahābhārata* must have existed at about 500 A.D.[3]

The Purāṇas form another important source for the study of Śaivism in ancient times, but their dates are very uncertain. R. C. Hazra has made a detailed study of the Paurāṇic chapters and his conclusions are generally accepted as a working hypothesis.[4] The *Mārkaṇḍeya*, the *Brahmāṇḍa*, the *Vāyu* and the *Viṣṇu* appear to be earlier than the rest of the Purāṇas. In his opinion different chapters of the Purāṇas containing the Smṛiti materials were written and added at different periods and the latest of such additions in the *Mārkaṇḍeya* (excluding the *Devī Māhātmya*), the *Brahmāṇḍa* and the

1. Macdonell, A. A., *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 309.
2. *Ibid*, p. 284.
3. Tripathi, R. S., *History of Ancient India*, p. 66.
4. Hazra, R. C., *Studies in the Puraṇic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, Chapters II-IV.

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Vāyu Purāṇas were made before the 5th century A. D., and most probably in the period between the 3rd and the 5th century A. D. Hence, these Purāṇas could not have acquired final form before this period. He assigns the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* to the last quarter of the third or the first quarter of the fourth century A, D.[1] According to Winternitz also, it is not later than 5th century A. D.[2] The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, which elaborates most of the legends of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, is certainly a late work. Hazra assigns it to the first half of the 6th century A. D.[3] Still the problem of its date remains unsettled.[4] In the opinion of Hazra, the date of the different chapters of the *Matsya Purāṇa*, ranges between the last quarter of the 3rd to the 10th century A. D.[5] According to him the *Matsya Purāṇa* was originally compiled by the Vaiṣṇavas and the Śaiva chapters were added later on.[6]

The Upa-Purāṇas as a class of literature are considered to be of late origin. R, C. Hazra is, however, of opinion that a few of them were written fairly early and the designation Upa-Purāṇa was ascribed to them much later. According to him, the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* should be dated between 400 and 500 A. D.[7]

Certain of non-religious works also form an important source for the study of the Śaivism in ancient times. Though opinions differ as to the date of the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya, yet it is generally accepted to be a work from the pen of Kauṭilya, the Prime Minister in the court of Chandragupta Maurya, and hence it is dated to the 4th century B. C. Patañjali was a contemporary of Puṣyamitra Śuṅga, and his *Mahābhāṣya* is naturally dated in 2nd century B- C. The date of the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* of Varāhamihira has been definitely fixed in the 6th century A. D. The *Amarakośa* is generally placed in the 5th-6th

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1. *Ibid*, p. 24.
2. Winternitz, M. A, *History of Indian Literature*, II, p. 545, fn. 2.
3. Hazra, R. C., *op. cit*, p. 55,
4. Majumdar, R. C., *The Classical Age*, p. 293,
5. Hazra, R. C. *op. cit.*, pp. 32 and 50-51.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
7. Hazra, R. C *Studies in the Upa-Purāṇas*. p. 212.

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century A. D., though sometimes it is assigned to the 8th century A. D.[1] Kālidāsa is believed to have flourished in the Gupta age and that he was a contemporary of Chandragupta II Vikramāditya or Kumāragupta I. His works may, therefore, be reasonably dated in the 4th and 5th centuries A. D. The *Mṛchchhakaṭika* of Śūdraka has been variously assigned to periods ranging from 2nd century B. C. to 11th century A. D.[2] It is, however, regarded to have been written in c. 6th century A. D. Bāṇabhaṭṭa enjoyed the patronage of Harṣavardhana, and hence his works, the H*a ṣacharita* and *Kādambarī*, are naturally to be dated in the 7th century A. D.

Although the literary works form important source for the study of Śaiviam in Bihar, yet the value of the archaeological materials cannot be minimised. As a matter of fact, for a work like this, archaeological sources are rather a *'must'* for they have great corroborative value. The sources which are archaeological in nature include not only the stone sculptures, the terracotta figurines and bronze statuettes and ancient monuments, but also the coins, the seals and the inscriptions.

Coins help us in a remarkable manner in the study of Śaivism in ancient times. Coins from Ujjaini and those of the Yaudheyas, Audambaras and of the Kuṣāṇa rulers and of the post-Gupta period of Śaśāṅka contain the figures of Lord Śiva. It is needless to say that the coins of Ujjaini and of the Audambaras and the Yaudheyas present the earliest iconographic type of the god. Moreover, the legends on the coins, more particularly on the coins of the Kuṣāṇas, point to the great importance that they attached to the god Śiva. So also the seals from Nalanda and Vaiśālī bear the name and the emblems (that is trident or *triśūla*) which refer to Śiva. Coins and seals are thus of great importance, for the they too help us in no uncertain terms in reconstructing the history of Śaivism in Bihar in ancient times.

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1. Majumdar, R. C., *The Classical Age*, p. 318.
2. Dasgupta, S. N. and De, S. K., *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 31

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Inscriptions too in a remarkable manner present important data for the study of Śaivism in Bihar. A number of these inscriptions not only inform about the peculiarities of the religious cult of Śiva with which this subject is intimately associated, but also record the preparation of the images of the god to be enshrined in them. On some rare occasions, they even contain rough description of the special features of the images of Śiva, the erection of whose shrines is being recorded in them. Thus, the numerous inscriptions from the state of Bihar throw very welcome light on the prevalence of Śaivism in the state of Bihar.

Temples are the house of gods and for the study of a particular religion and in a particular region it is essential to take into account the study of the temples of that deity whose worship is proposed to be studied in that region. Temples as a matter of fact furnish concrete proof with regard to the worship of a particular god in a particular region. In Bihar there had been numerous temples dedicated to the worship of Śiva. But unfortunately a large number of them are in ruined state. Most of them have been completely obliterated and as such whatsoever important temples survive have also been taken into consideration. The study of the Śaiva temples in this work is not exhaustive but illustrative to show the extent to which Śaivism had made impact in the religious life of people of the state.

Numerous images of Śiva in a variety of forms obtained in different parts of the state form an important source material for the study of the cult of the god. Art and religion are intimately associated since very early time. Images are the visual representations of the god who is widely worshiped in the state of Bihar. The rise and development of the cult and the constant increase in the mythological stories associated with it find ready illustrations in the sculptural representations of the deity. Thus, numerous figures of the god throw very interesting sidelight on the spread of Śaivism in Bihar. As such, various reperesentative sculptural representations of the god have also been studied.

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It would, however, not be out of place if some of the salient features of the present work are enumerated here. Firstly, as far as it could be practicable, no pains have been spared to make the study of Śaivism in Bihar in ancient times sufficiently comprehensive by utilising the literary as well as the archaeological material exhaustively. Secondly, the various representations of the god and his vehicle in stone sculptures, terracottas and bronzes and on coins and seals have been discussed in such a manner that they may suggest the various aspects connected with the development and spread of the cult of the god in the different parts of the state in ancient times. Thirdly, wherever it could be possible, an attempt has been made to correlate the textual description with the various kinds of the representations of the deity in art. Fourthly, an attempt has also been made to present the description of ancient temples of Śiva in Bihar to suggest their importance in the religious life of the people of Bihar. And lastly, it has also been endeavoured to present a complete picture of the prevalence of the religion of the god in the state of Bihar in ancient period.

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CHAPTER 1

ŚIVA IN LITERATURE

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The Purāṇas have a very interesting story which runs as follows[1] : "Viṣṇu at the end of a *kalpa* was slumbering on the deep abyses of waters; a great illumination occurred then near Viṣṇu and from it emerged Brahmā. Brahmā saw before him another person Viṣṇu; Brahmā approached Viṣṇu and introduced himself to Viṣṇu as the creator of the whole universe and demanded of Viṣṇu who he was, to which Viṣṇu replied that he was also the architect of universe; Brahmā could not brook the statement of Viṣṇu and a quarrel ensued between them both. At this juncture there appeared a Liṅga resembling the great cosmic fire with hundred of tongues of flames blazing out of it. Instead of quarrelling with each other, Brahmā and Viṣṇu set about to find out the top and bottom respectively of this huge mass of fire, for which purpose the former assumed the form of a swan (*haṁsa*) and flew up in the air, while the latter took the form of a boar and burrowed down into the earth. The attempt of these two gods to discover the reality and measure of this fiery pillar proved futile They then came to realise that there certainly was something far greater than themselves, whose top and bottom they could not find out, thus humiliated they approached this pillar of fire and began to praise it." The Paurāṇic story has been illustrated in a characteristic manner in some of the Liṅgodbhavamūrttīs still

1. The story has almost identically been narrated in the *Liṅga Purāṇa, Kūrma Purāṇa, Vāyu Purāṇa* and *Śiva Purāṇa*. Rao, T. A. G., *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. i, pp. 105-06.

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existing in the Śiva temples of South India.[1] Śiva althouth declared that" all three of us are really one, but are now seperated into three aspects, namely Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara",[2] the Paurāṇic story and the sculptural representations thereof establish in no unequivocal terms the supremacy of Lord Śiva-Maheśvara or Mahādeva, the Great God.

The early history of Śaivism in ancient India is surrounded in mystery. However, the origin of this cult can be traced back at least to the 3rd millennium B. C. when a highly rich civilisation flourished in the valley of river Indus, suggesting thereby the prevalence of this cult among the pre-Āryan people of India.[3] Almost all the qualities, that have been attributed to Śiva in the later ages, are found in the nucleus form in the seals and objects discovered in the course of excavations in the Indus valley cities,[4] The people of Mohenjodaro worshipped a male deity who may be regarded as the prototype of Śiva. "One of the seals," writes Mackay,[5] "depicts a nude deity with horns and three faces, seated on a stool with his heels pressed closely together in what is, evidently, a ritualistic posture. Surrounding him are a number of animals—to deer or antelopes, a rhinoceros, an elephant, a tiger and a buffalo. The figure wears a large number of bangles in either arm, after the fashion of some of the female goddesses on the armlets, and a fan-shaped erection, very like the headdress worn by many of the female figurines, rises from his head between horns resembling those of a bull or a buffalo". According to Mackay, ' No less than three seals bearing a representation of this deity have been unearthed, in two cases the god being seated on a

1. Cf. Liṅgodbhavamūrttis in the Kailāśanātha temple at Conjeeveram, (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, pt. i, Pl. xiii), in the temple of Śiva at Ambar Māgālam (*Ibid.*, pl. xiv. 2) and in the Daśāvatāra Cave temple at Ellora (*Ibid.*, pl xiv. 1).
2. *Ibid*,, Vol. II, pl i, p. 107.
3. Marshall, J.., *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Valley Civilization*, Vol. I pp, 48 ff.
4. Jash, P., *History of Śaivism*, p. 1.
5. Mackay, E., *Early Indus Civilizatton*, p. 56.

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stool, and in the third on the ground. On all the three seals he is nude, save for a cincture round the waist, but wears a number of bangles; on two seals he has three faces, and on the third a single face in profile. All the three representations have horns, but on two seals a sprig of flowers or leaves rising from the head between the horns strongly suggests that the figure so ornamented was a fertility or vegetation god-analogous with Śiva, who personifies the reproductive powers of the nature" Marshall has identified this figure as the Indian god Śiva He points out that the religion of the Indus Valley people was hardly distinguishable from that aspect of Hinduism which is bound with animism and the cults of Śiva and the Mother Goddess."[1] This apparently explains the later conception of Śiva as a Yogin and Paśupati. It may, however be noted that Śiva is the best of the Yogīs, and as such he is known under the appellations Yogendra, Yogeśvara Mahātapaḥ and Mahāyogī, etc.[2] Besides being a Yogin, Śiva is also known as the lord or protector of animals, "pastor of the flock or herd" (*Paśupati*), a title which has been attributed to Śiva in the Vedic and subsequent literature very often.[3] All this shows that there is a good deal of pre-Āryan or non-Āryan element in the character of Śiva.[4]

That the worship of the phallic emblems, the Linga and the Yonī was also prevalent is clear from the discovery of scores of aniconic objects of stone together with the ring stones. In the words of Mackay,[5] "certain large, smooth, cone-shaped stones unearthed at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa were undoubtedly the Lingas of those days, but it is impossible to say whether they were associated with the worship of Śiva at that early date. This association, however, seems more probable now that Sir John Marshall has identified one of the gods on the seal amulets as the prototype of the Śiva of historic times and the present day." Among animals, Brāhmani bulls were

1. Marshall, J., op. cit., p. vii.
2. Monier-Williams, *Religious Thought and Life in Ancient India*, p. 83.
3. Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, p, 35.
4. Banerjee, P., *Early Indian Religions*. p. 27.
5. Mackay, E., op. cit., p. 61.

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very common. If not, worshipped, they were at least adored by the people of the Harappa culture. It may, however, be noted that the bull is regarded as the vehicle of Lord Śiva.

In the *Ṛgveda*, there is no mention of Śiva by his name, instead we find a deity Rudra by name who is the prototype of Śiva of the later days. Rudra thus forms a link between the Vedic religion and the later Śaiva worship. It would, therefore, be found profitable if some of the characteristics of the Vedic Rudra are taken note of.[1] He occupies a minor position in the *Ṛgveda*, but gradually in later mythology he came to occupy a prominent place, and still later he was identified with the popular god Śiva. Rudra, a subordinate deity in the *Ṛgveda*, belongs to the aerial group (*antarikṣasthāna* or *madhyama-sthāna*) in the Vedic classification of gods.[2] He is the subject of only three hymns in the *Ṛgveda*,[3] shares one with Soma,[4] is referred to in one hymn as the father of the Maruts,[5] and is mentioned in all about seventy-five times.[6] On the whole, the gods are benevolent in the *Ṛgveda*, the only one with malevolent traits being Rudra.[7]

In the *Ṛgveda*, he is the terrific god whose wrath has to be appeased. Prayers were usually offered to him by the people to pacify his anger and used to be generally addressed thus: O Rudra, do not out of thy anger, injure our children and descendants, our people, our cattle, our houses, and do not kill our men, we invoke thee always with offerings."[8] Further, it is said, "His shaft may not fall upon his worshippers, their parents, children, men, cattle or horses, he is besougtht to avert his great malevolence and his bolt from his

1. Sarkar, A., *Śiva in Mediaeval Indian Literature*, p. 1.
2. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 118-19, RV, 1, 1 9.
3. RV, 1, 43, 1, 114,vii, 46.
4. RV, vi, 74.
5. RV, ii, 39.
6. Muir, *OST*, Vol. IV, p. 399,
7. Majumdar R. C. (ed.), *Vedic Age*, p. 367,
8. Bhandarkar, R. G., *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 103, *RV*, 1, 14. 8,

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worshippers."[1] But Rudra is not only a malevolent god; rather he is also a benevolent one at the same time in the *Ṛgveda*. While on the one hand, his anger, ill-will and destructive shafts are deprecated, on the other, he is described as benevolent, easily invoked, beneficient, and gracious and auspicious (śiva).[2] He is the protector of the creatures and lord of this vast world.[3] He possesses healing remedies and is once described as the greatest of the physicians.[4] In this respect, the hymns ascribed to the sage Gaurava is noteworthy, where the god has been described as wise, bountiful and peaceful, as the strongest and most glorious of beings, as lord of the world, etc.[5] These appellations, as will be seen, bear close affinity with those of Śiva.[6]

Rudra has been regarded as the father of the Maruts. The word 'Rudra' having been derived from the root *'rud'*, meaning 'crying, howling, roaring', the god has been associated with the Maruts famous for their howling as their father. This relationship brings into affinity with Indra and Agni, for the Maruts are described in certain Vedic passages as worshippers of Agni and in others as followers of Indra whose associates they are.[7] "They are furious like wild beasts, but playful like children or calves."[8] They are the real storm gods as the sons and associates of Rudra and Indra, both representing the powerful aspects of storm, rain, thunder and lightening, etc. The affinities between Indra and Rudra can be traced not only through the Maruts, but also through elephant symbolism, fertility characteristics and sex symbolism. Besides his having affini-

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1. Keith, A. B. in Hayward Oriental Series (Lanman), Vol. 31, p. 143, *RV*, iv. 3. 1.
2. *RV* I, 114, 9, II. 33. 5, II. 33. 7, X. 92. 9.
3. *RV*, I, 129. 3, 1. 114. 9, II. 33. 9.
4. *RV*, I, 43. 4, 1. 114, 5, II. 33. 2, 4, 7, 12, 13.
5. *RV*, I. 43.
6. Sarkar, A., *Śiva in Mediaval Indian Literature*, p, 2.
7. Banerjee, P., *Early Indian Religions*, pp. 27-28.
8. *Ibid*, p. 28.

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ties with Indra, Rudra is also regarded as a form of Agni. The term Rudra has been applied unequivocally to Agni in a hymn which has been exclusively dedicated to that divinity. All this would show that in *Ṛgveda* itself, Rudra was conceived under various forms and described as such.

There are remarkable affinities between Agni and Rudra. As Weber points out, there took place a complete blending of the two in the *Śatarudrīya*.[1] The epithets of Rudra—Śiva in the *Śatarudrīya* hymn fall into two distinct categories. The epithets Girīśa, Girīśaya, Girīśānta, Girītra (dweller in the mountain) and Kapardin,[2] Vyuptakeśa Ugra, Bhīma, Bhiṣaj and Śiva, Śambhū, Śiva and Śaṅkara take us to the storms and Nīlagrīva, Sitikaṇṭha, Hiraṇyagarbha, Vilohita, Bhava, Śarva and Paśupati to fire or Agni. Again, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* treats Rudra in various forms as the names of Agni; "Agni is a god. These are his names-Sarva as the eastern people call him, Bhava as the Bāhikas, Paśūnāṁpati, Rudra and Agni."[3] A later part of the *Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā* enumerates as forms of one god Agni, Aśani, Paśupati, Bhava, Sarva, Mahādeva, Ugradeva,[4] and several others. In the Epic-Purāṇic tradition, Skanda-Kārttikeya is regarded sometimes as the son of Rudra, and sometimes that of Agni, mainly due to close affinity existing between the two gods in the early Vedic times.[5]

Again, in the *Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā*, Rudra is attributed the names Tryambaka and Śiva,[6] two very important epithets of Rudra-Śiva in the post-Vedic times Further, he is called here Krittivāsa.[7] Ambikā, who is called Śiva's wife in the post-Vedic literature, is

1. *Indische Studies*, II. 19-22, Banerjee, P. *Op. cit*, p. 28,
2. Kapardin is an epithet of Rudra in the *Ṛgveda* also (*ṚV* I, 114. 1). It is also a title of Pūṣan, *ṚV*. IV, 55. 2.
3. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, I. 7, 3, 8,
4. *Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā*, XXXIX. 8.
5. Banerjee, P., *op-cit.*, pp. 28-29.
6. *Ibid*, *RV*. lii 58- 3, the word Tryaṁbaka seems to have been an epithet of Rudra in *RV*, vii 59. 12.
7. *Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā*, iii. 6.

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mentioned here for the first time as Rudra's sister.[1] In a Ṛgvedic hymn, the term *Vṛṣabha* is applied to him five times.[2] From these references, we can see that much of the stuff from which Śaiva legends developed is as old as the oldest part of the *Ṛgveda*.

In the *Yajurveda* and *Atharvaveda*, many more epithets of this god are available. The multitude of epithets perhaps shows the god's manifold activities or indicates his increasing popularity. In the *Atharvaveda*, we get a curious description of his appearance.[3] His belly is blue, his back red and his neck blue, mention being also made of his mouth and teeth, that is to say, a practically complete anthropomorphic form has been given to him. The *Yajurveda* mentions him as clothed in a skin and as dwelling in the mountain.[4] In view of both the Vedas, Śiva's appearance and his epithets like *nīlakaṇṭha* (blue necked), *girīśa* (lord of mountains), *Kṛttivāsa* (wearer of tiger skin), etc., are worthy of note.

In the Brāhmaṇas, Rudra is more powerful. Even the gods are afraid of him, lest they be killed by Rudra. Under the name of Mahādeva (the great god), he is essentially the slayer of cattle, and is even prone to slay men. And every effort is made to propitiate the fierce god. The *Śatarūdrīya* litany of the *Yajurveda*, the *Brāhmaṇas* (specially the *Aitreya* and *Śatapatha*) and the *Sūtra* works (like the *Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra*) are the sources from which we know a great deal of this 'complex' god. The *Śatarudrīya* hymns feel his presence in almost every aspect of nature—in the mountains, the woods, the paths and the streams. It is, therefore, prescribed that the ritual offerings should be made to Rudra in various places and on varied occasions. Among the distinctive names used for this god in the *Kauśītakī Brāhmaṇa*, Mahādeva and Īśāṇa are the most important.[5] In the late *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, one of the five faces of Śiva as Pañchatuṇḍa is known as Īśāṇa, the other four being Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva,

1. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 74.
2. *RV*, II. 33.
3. *AV*, 15. 1. 7-8, 11. 26.
4. *YV*. 12 48.
5. *KB*, 6. 1-9.

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Aghora and Tatpuruṣa.[1] In later works like the *Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra*, the names Hara, Mṛda, Śiva and Śaṅkara are ascribed to Rudra. The first three names refer to Rudra's peaceful nature, but, Hara, derived from the root *hṛ*, 'to steal', reminds us of the god's association with robbers and thieves.[2] Thus Rudra of the Vedic period becomes Śiva in the later age.

Coming to the great epics, the Vedic Rudra seems to have been transformed into Śiva, who is a popular god not only of northern India but also of the southern half of the couutry. In this period, as attested by the *Rāmāyaṇa*, he is popularly known by the name of Mahādeva, the great god with three eyes.[3] He is also called Śambhu'[4], Tryambaka[5] and Bhūtapati[6]. The *Rāmāyṇa* relates that after Rāmachandra had put Sītā to the fire ordeal, Vaiśarvaṇa (Kubera), Yama, Indra, Varuṇa, Mahādeva, Vṛṣadhvaja with three eyes, and Brahmā, lord of the three worlds, came down to Laṅkā to meet Rāma.[7] They acknowledged Rāma as the great Lord Nārāyṇa,[8] but it is salso said that Mahādeva arranged or rather granted a boon which enabled Rāma to see his dead father and fly in a divine chariot.[9] Later, there is a referenee to a golden Linga which Rāvaṇa carried everywhere with him.[10] It is also related that Rudra, later called Mahādeva, pleased with the prayers of the demon Madhu, gave the latter his own trident.[11] Mahādeva and his consort Pārvatī or Umā are referred to in the Epic[12]. The destruction of Karṇa is

1. *TA*, 10, 43-47.
2. In the *Ṣanmukha Śāstar*, Śiva's son Kumāra is referreed to as the lorp of thieves.
3. *Rām.*, VI. 120. 3,
4. *Ibid*,, VI. 43. 59.
5. *Ibid*,, II. 43. 6,
6. *Ibid.*, VI. 59. 9.
7. *Ibid.*, VI. 105. 1-2.
8. *Ibid.*, VI. 105. 17.
9. *Ibid.*, VI. 107.
10. *Ibia.*, VII. 31, 38,
11. *Ibid.*, VII. 53. 5-10.
12. *Ibid.*. VII. 4-27-9, VII. 13. 22-31, VII. 78. 11-29.

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also related in the work.[1] Indrajit, the son of Rāvaṇa, worshipped Śiva and won the god's favour[2]. Vibhiṣaṇa, the brother of Rāvaṇa, is also represented as having been received with favours by the great god after he had deserted his brother [3] But the Rāmāyaṇa being pre-eminently a Viṣṇuite work, it has very naturally assigned Viṣṇu a position superior to that of Śiva, and, in order to illustrate the superiority of Viṣṇu, it narrates a fight between the two gods in which Viṣṇu emerges triumphant, and hence regarded as superior to Mahādeva.[4]

There are copious references to Śiva in the *Mahābhārata* suggesting him to be a very popular deity. The Epic being a work of long period, having undergone several stages of development, we do not find him occupying a predominant position in the earlier portions.[5] Brahmā is seen calling him *putraka* (son) from whom the latter seeks advice, who sets him a task and asks him not to kill.[6] He again drinks poison at the instance of Brahmā, whence he is known as Nīlakaṇṭha.[7] And Mahādeva is regarded as a title of Viṣṇu[8] However, the importance and popularity of the cult of Śiva spread with the growth of the Epic. In its late portions, there are several references recording the exploits and achievements of Lord Śiva. In the *Vanaparvan*, it is said that Jayadratha, after being captured by Bhīṣma and released at the request of Yudhiṣṭhira, worshipped Mahādeva.[9] The Śāntiparvan states how Paraśurāma worshipped Mahādeva, on Mount Gandhamādana and obtained his celebrated axe. In the *Droṇaparvan*, Arjuna is said to have won the Pāśupata weapon by appeasing this god.[10] In this context has been recited a hymn in honour of Śiva,

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1. *Ibid.*, I-22. 10-14.
2. *Ibid., Sundarakāṇḍa* 78. 17. 19. 50.
3. Muir, *OST*, Vol. IV, p. 355.
4. *Rām*, I. 175.
5. Banerjee, P.. *Early Indian Religions*, p. 33.
6. *Mbh.*, I. 211. 4, VII. 52. 45; 54, 13.
7. *Ibid* , I, 18, 42,
8. *Ibid*,, III, 14, 147,
9. *Ibid.*, III 7 -101.
10. *Ibid* , XII 84-88

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in course of which he was designated as the soul of all things.[1] Jarāsandha is also described as a great devotee of Mahādeva.[2] In a number of passages in the *Anuśāsanaparvan*, Mahādeva is extolled as an 'all god' with the attributes of supreme Brāhmaṇ.[3] Asked by Yudhiṣṭhira to declare the name of this deity, Bhīṣma is said to have expressed his inability as Mahādeva is all pervading but nowhere is he to be seen[4] He transcends material nature and is meditated upon by the *ṛṣis* versed in contemplation He is indestructible and supreme Brāhmaṇa. He is both existent and non-existent.[5] In the same *Parvan*, Kṛṣṇa is represented as having gone to the Himalayas to propitiate Śiva to have a son for Jāmbavatī.[6] Upamanyu, a devotee of Śiva, acquainted Kṛṣṇa with Śiva's exploits and said that Mahādeva was the only god whose phallus was worshipped by all, including the gods.[7] All these would clearly show that the worship of Śiva was widespread in the country during the period of the Epics.

Kṛṣṇa describes the destruction of Dakṣa-Yajña by Śiva, while describing the greatness of Śiva.[8] He begins by recommending the recitation of the *Śatarudrīya* every morning, and then states that there is nothing higher than Mahādeva [9] But, if he is angry, he can destroy the world.[10] As an example, Kṛṣṇa cites the story of Rudra's destruction of the Dakṣa-Yajña and the latter's propitiation by the recital of the *Śatarudrīya* by the assembled gods. They also provided a special share of every sacrifice for Rudra, whereupon he restored life to everything he had destroyed.[11] Kṛṣṇa then relates the destruction of Tripura.[12] In the

1. Banerjee, P., *op. cit.*, p. 33(*Viśvātmane Viśvaśrijie Viśvamāvritya tiṣṭhate*).
2. *Mbh.*, V. 7. 81-88.
3. Banerjee, P., *op. cit.*, p, 34.
4. *Anuśāsanaparvan*, section xiv, pp. 49 ff. (P. C. Roy's English translation of *Mahābhārata)*, *Mbh.*, XIII. 14. 3. ff.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. Roy, P. C., *op. cit.*, pp. 73 ff.
8. *Mbh.*, XIII, 145.
9. *Ibid.*, XIII. 145.
10. *Ibid*, XIII. 145. 8-10.
11. *Ibid.*, XIII. 145. 11-23.
12. *Ibid.*, XII. 145. 24-28.

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Mahābhārata is also narrated the famous story of Arjuna's long prayer to Mahādeva; Mahādeva's appearence as a Kirāta; their fight; Arjuna's defeat; and ultimately Śiva pleased with Arjuna's powers presents him the famous *Pāśupata* weapon.[1] Mahādeva also granted to the childless Sagara the boon of sixty thousand sons.[2] Their descendant, Bhagīratha was able to bring the Ganges down to earth through boon granted by Mahādeva to him,[3] and the god checked her descent by allowing her to fall on his forehead (*lalāṭa-deśa*).[4] For his benevolent acts, Śiva is called *bhakt-ānukampī bhagavāna* (Lord who favours his devotees).[5] Arjuna, as well as Kṛṣṇa, daily offered prayers to Śiva[6] The popular devotion to Śiva is best attested by the *Śiva Sahaṣranāma* chapter, which gives 1008 names of Śiva.

Religious works, as it has already been seen, bristle with references to Śiva, thereby suggesting the prevalence of the worship of the god in ancient times. There are certain non-religious works as well which furnish some very valuable informations regarding Śiva's worship. The great grammarian Pāṇini, who flourished in Cir. 5th Century B. C., records in his *Aṣṭādhyāyī* several names of Rudra such as Bhava, Śarva, Rudra and Mṛda.[7] Though Śiva had not been included here, Pāṇini's *Sūtra Śivādibhyoṇ* refers indirecty to the followers or worshippers of the god.[8] The aphorism means that 'the affix *aṇ* comes in the sense of a descendant, after the words Śiva etc.' The form Śaiva thus derived means a descendant of Śiva, but also denotes, secondarily, a worshipper of Śiva.[9]

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1. *Ibid.*, III, 40 and 41-42.
2. *Ibid.*, III, 104, 6-23.
3. *Ibid.*, III, 107, and 108.
4. *Ibid.*, III, 108, 8.
5. *Ibid.*, VIII. 41. 13.
6. *Ibid.*, VII. 56. 3 and VIII. 21. 13.
7. *On Pāṇini*, IV. 1. 49.
8. *Ibid.*, IV. 1. 112.
9. Sastri, K. A. N., *Comprehensive History of India*, Vol II, p. 395.

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Particular mention may be made of the *Arthaśāstra*, the work from the pen of Kauṭilya, the celebrated Prime Minister in the court of the Mauryan monarch Chandragupta Maurya, and as such dated in the 4th Century B C.[1] Although primarily a monumental work on ancient INDIAN POLITY, it contains also stray references which throw significant sidelight on the religious condition of the period. It is interesting to note that Kauṭilya in the chapter on the '*Dūrga Nivāsa*' states that in the centre of the city, shrinese (*Koṣṭham*) of gods such as Aparājitā, Apratihata, Jayanta, and Vijayanta should be made and so also be made the abodes of Śiva, Vaiśravana, Aśvins, Śrī and Madirā.[2] Thus, Kauṭilya refers to the construction of the shrine of Śiva together with the shrines of the other deities in the centre of the city. An image of Śiva is mentioned also in the *Āpastamba Gṛhyasutra*.[3] It is interesting to note that the Śiva emblems like the bull and the *nandīpada* occur very frequently on the punch-mrked coins[4], the earliest coinage of India (much of them going to as early as the sixth-fifth century B. C.). All this would show that the cult of Śiva was widely prevalent in the sixth to fourth centuries B. C.

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1. There have been widely divergent views as to the date of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*. Jacobi is strongly of the opinion that the work was coms posed in the 4th Century B. C. in the life time of Chandragupta Maurya (*Indian Antiquary*, 1918, pp. 157-61 and 187-95). Some scholars have suggested a date as late as Gupta period. (For the dates of the *Arthaśāstra*, cf, *IHQ*, XI, pp. 211 ff; RayChaudhuri, H. C; *Political History of Ancient India*, pp. 246 ff; Majumdar, R. C., *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 285-87. etc.). It may, however, be said that at least the kernel of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* belongs to the Mauryan period and embodies the views of Kauṭilya, the Mauryan Prime Minister. It may have been retouched here and there in later times.

2. *KA* (Kangle's translation), pt ii p. 80 and R. Shamashastry's translation Bk. I. Ch. IV. p. 54. (*Aparajitapratihata Jayanta-Vaijayanta Koṣṭham Śiva-Vaiśravaṇaśvin-Śrī-Madirā gṛhaṇī cha*),

3. *Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra*, VII. 20. 3.

4. Smith, V. A., *Catalogue of the Indian Museum Coins*, Vol. I. pp. 140-41

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Megasthenes, a Greek ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya and contemporary of Kauṭilya, preserved a full and fair account of geography, products, and social and political institutions of India in his work entitled '*Indika*'. Although this book is lost, many extracts from it are preserved in the forms of quotations by later classical authors who regarded it as the standard authority on India. This work, though not definitely dated, may be taken to be a document of the Mauryan history. In this work, Megasthenes tells us quite a lot about the Indian representatives of Heracles (identified with Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva) and Dionysios (Dynysus identified with Śiva). Regarding the worship of the latter (i. e. Dynysus or Śiva), he says that it was specially popular in the hill regions where grew the vines.[1] Elsewhere, Megasthenes haṣ compared the hunting expedition of the king (i. e. Chandragupta Maurya) with the procession of Dionysios.[2]

That Śiva was worshipped and temples were constructed in his honour during the Mauryan period is also attested by another equally important work namely the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali. Patñjali, the great grammarian, was a contemporary of Puṣyamitra Śuṅga, who had established the Śuṅga rule by subverting the Mauryan dynasty and usurping the throne in e. 185 B. C. Patañjali, commenting upon the *Vyākaraṇa Sūtra* of Pānini,[3] expressly refers to the images of Śiva, Skanda and Viśākha being made for worship. The relevant passage runs thus :

apanya ityuchyate tatredam na sidhayati/
Śivaḥ Skandaḥ Viśākha iti/ kim kāraṇam/
Mauryair-hiraṇyārthibhiḥ-archāh prakalpitāḥ/
Bhavettāsu na syat/ yāstvetāḥ samprati/
pūjārthāstāsu bhaviṣyati/[4]

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1. McCrindle, *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, pp. 31-35.
2. *Ibid*, p, 71.
3. *On Pāṇini*, V. 3. 99.
4. Kielhorn, F. (Ed) *Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali*, Vol. II, p. 429.

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The above passage occurring in the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali is highly important inasmuch as it suggests the wide prevalence of the worship of Śiva, Skanda and Viśākha in the time of the Mauryas and so also in the later periods. It further suggests that the worship of Śiva along with Skanda and Viśākha was so popular among the general masses that the Mauryan goverment thought of making money by selling the images of these gods.[1] During the time of Patañjali, although the practice of the sale of the images of the gods was stopped; yet there is no doubt that they continued to be worshipped, for his image and those of his sons (Skanda and Viśākha, perhaps at that time two separate entities, but later on merged into one) were in great demand.[2] The association of Skanda and Viśākha with Śiva mentioned in the passage is probably due to the fact that Śiva's mythology was already much developed and his worship a common fact.[3] However, it has already been noted that Patañjali makes express mention of the images of Śiva along with those of Skanda and Viśākha being made for the purpose of worship (*sampratī-pūjārthe*)

Patañjali refers also to the devotees of Śiva-the 'Śiva-bhāgavatas' (*bhāgavatoayamiti bhāgavataḥ śivasya bhāgavatoḥ iti śiva bhāgavataḥ*).[4] This reference is of unique interest for it is the first unambiguous mention of a Śaiva sect. It may, however, be noted that Pāṇini's sūtra,[5] '*ayaḥśūlaḍaṇḍājinābhyāṁ ṭhaṭṭhañau*', lays down that the affixes '*ṭhak*' and '*ṭhañ*' come respectively after '*ayaḥśūla*' and '*daṇḍājina*' (in the sense of 'one who strives to gain something by that'), Patañjali says that a Śiva-bhāgavata was an *ayaḥśūlikaḥ*, i.e. one who carried an iron-lance. He observes that because this type of sectary

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1. Cf. the sale of the images of Indra during the Vedic period.
2. Sastri, K. A. N. *op. cit.*, p. 396.
3. Jash, P., *History of Śaivism*, p. 3.
4. Kielhorn, F, *op. cit.* pp. 387-88.
5. On Pāṇini, V 2. 76.

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seeks to obtain his end by violence, which should be got by mildness; he is called '*āyaḥśūlikaḥ*'.[1] Though he makes no observation on the word '*daṇḍājin*', it is apparent that a shaft (*daṇḍa*) and a hide (*ajina*) were also the characteristic marks of a Śiva-bhāgavata who was both an '*āyaḥśūlika*' and a '*daṇḍājinika*'. The carrying of an iron lance and staff and the wearing of a hide were the sectary's outward badges of devotion, and these characteristics seem to have been deprecated by orthodox people so that '*daṇḍājinika*' came to be explained as '*dambhika*', i.e. a 'proud hypocrite' by the later commentators. Patañjali appears to have had a poor opinion of these sectaries because they were prone to use violent means where peaceful measures would have served.[2]

Patañjali also mentions in the *Mahābhāṣya* different names of Rudra viz. Rudra, Śiva, Girīśa, Mahādeva, Trayambaka, Bhava and Śarva, etc [3] and used the word 'Śaiva'[4] the name under which the sectarian Śiva worshippers are generally known. All these evidently show that Śaivism was a popular cult in the time of Patañjali.

The *Milinda Pañha* enumerates the followers of the mystic cults of Manibhadra, Pūrṇabhadra, Chandra, Sūrya, Lali, Śiva, Vanudeva and so on, who were, in fact, believers in many divinities, each the centre of a cult.[5] This large medley of names occurs in a still more smplified version in the *Jñatadhwma* and *Rājaprasnīy Suttas* of the Jaina Āgamas, which refer to the cult festivals of Rajagṛha in honour of Indra, Skanda, Rudra, Śiva, Vaiśravana, Nāga, Yakṣa, Bhūta, Nadī, Taḍāgam Vṛkṣa, Chaitya, Parvata, Udyāna, Giri, Stūpa, Mukunda, Sāgara and so on.[6]

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1. Kielhorn, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 387-88.
2. Sastri, K. A. N., *op. cit.*, pp. 396-97.
3. Kielhorn, *op. cit.*, II, p. 91. The names Bhava, Śarva, Rudra and Mṛḍa, as already seen, have been found also in the aphorism of Pāṇini, IV. 1.49.
4. Kielhorn, *op. cit.*, II, p. 282.
5. Diwakar, R R., *Bihar Through the Ages*, p. 231.
6. *Ibid*,, p. 231

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Śiva was a favourite deity of Kālidāsa whom he invoked in the beginning of his works. In the beginning of his masterpieces, the *Abhijñānaśākuntalaṁ*,[1] he has invoked the blessings of Lord Śiva and has described his eight different forms identifying them with the sun, the moon, the Yajamāna (sacrifice) and the five different matters, i.e. earth, water, fire and wind and ether (*ākāśa*)[2] which are the essence of the universe. In his *Vikramorvaśī*,[3] he has described the Lord as the non-dual Supreme God and has identified him with the Brāhmaṇ of the Upaniṣad (*Vedānteṣu Vāmāhurekapuruṣaṁ*), who pervades the universe (*Vyāpya sthitam rodasī*) and is worshipped by the seekers of salvation. In the opening lines of both the *Raghuvaṁśa*[4] and *Kumārasaṁbhava*[5], Kālidāsa has paid his respectful homage to Śiva. His *Kumārasambhava* practically centres round the family affairs of Lord Śiva resulting in the establishment of the superiority of the Lord and his family. A complete picture of a Śiva image is given in Kālidāsa's descriptions of the deity in the context of his marriage with Umā in the *Kumārasambhava*.[6] *Bhaṣma* (ashes) is smeared over his body and the crescent serves for his *tilaka* mark on the forehead. He wears the elephant hide (*gajājina*). He has snakes as his ornaments. He is attended upon by his merry Gaṇas bearing swords and by the gods like Brahmā and Viṣṇu, and the goddesses like Gaṅgā and Yamunā bearing flywhisks. He rides his bull on whose back is spread the skin of lion, and the path of his Nandī wearing golden girdle containing bells lies through the sky.[7] The *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* of Varāhamihira also presents a graphic picture of his anthropomorphic form thus : 'Śambhu has a crescent on his head, bull for his ensign and a vertically placed third eye (on his forehead); (in his two hands) he holds a trident and the

1. *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, 2. 18-22.
2. cf. *Tantraśāstra Rudrayāmala*, 13, 21.
3. *Vikramorvaśī*, 6. 29-32.
4. *Raghuvaṁśa*, 4. 17-20.
5. *Kumārasaṁbhava*, 2. 8-10,
6. Upadhya, B. S., *India in Kālidāsa*, pp. 313-14.
7. *Kumārasaṁbhava*, 7. 32-49.

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bow called Pināka (*Śambhoḥ śiras-indukalā tṛtīyam-api lochanaṁ chordhvam śūlam dha..uḥ pināka*ṁ).[1] These are obviously the iconographic features of Śiva images which we usually meet with in the sculptural representations of the god. In his *Meghādūta* as well, Kālidāsa has described the popularity of Śiva on different occasions, most prominent of which is the description of Mahākalā of Ujjayini. In the *Meghadūta*, a Yakṣa is banished for a year at Rāmagiri by Śiva, his master, as he fails to perform his duties. With the advance of the rainy season, he remembers his wife lamenting in their abode at Alakā, and begs a passing cloud to carry his beloved his news and the assurance of his devotion.

When the Chinese traveller Hiuen-Tsiang had visited Kapilavastu, he had noticed near the eastern gate of the city an old temple of Īśvara (Śiva) where the infant Siddhāratha was taken by his father because of the belief that the "Śākya children who here seek the protection always obtain what they ask".[3] According to the legend the stone image raised itself and saluted prince Siddhāratha.[4] Beal thinks that the scene is represented on the Amarāvatī stūpa (2nd cen. B. C.).[5] The legend is, therefore, ancient and undoubtedly points to the conclusion that Śiva was the *Kuladevatā* (family deity) of the Śākyas. From this, it may be presumed that the temple mentioned above is certainly one of the oldest Śaiva monuments of which we have knowledge and possesses great interest for the history of Śaivism. This shows evidently that Śiva had been a very popular deity of northern India even a few hundred years before Christ.

The Tibetan scholar Dharmasvāmin, who visited Bihar in between 1232 and 1234 A.D., furnishes an important piece of information

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1. *Bṛhatasaṁhitā* Ch. LVII, 43; Sastri, A. M., *India as Seen in the Bṛhatsaṁhitā of Varāhamihira*, p 136.
2. *Meghadūta Pūrvamegha*, 34, 35 and 37.
3. *St-yu-ki*, Vol. II. p. 23.
4. *Ibid.*,
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 26-29.

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that in order to protect the Buddha image from attack by the non-Buddhists, the monks at Vajrāsana (Bodhgaya) put up an image of Śiva in front of it to hide the image of the Buddha.

One of the important aspects connected with the cult of Śiva enjoying wide prevalence even in our days is the worship of Liṅga (or phallus), the symbol of creation. Phallicism is one of the ancient forms of worship in India and the ancient world [1] The existence of the phallic (Liṅga) worship can be traced as far back, as already referred to above, as the Indus Valley period, as is evident from the discovery of numerous aniconic objects together with the ringstones.[2] Even in the *Ṛgveda* itself, there is evidence of the Liṅga worship, wherein the non-Āryans have been described contemptuously as the Śiśnadevas (i. e. those whose Lord is Śiśna or Liṅga). In the *Ṛgveda*, Indra is implored not to allow the Śiśnadevas to approach the sacrifice.[3] The Ṛgvedic verse describes the god as having slain the Śiśnadevas and having conquered by his craft the riches of the city with a hundred gates.[4] Being the worshipper of the Liṅga, the non-Āryans were locked down upon by the Vedic Aryans. In the words of P. Banerjee, "In all probability, they (i.e. the Śiśnadevas) were a class of people who were beyond the pale of the Vedic society and the followers of phallic rites."[5] However, in due course, with the growth of the neo-Brahmanism, the Liṅga worship came to be associated with the Āryans as an essential element of historic Śaivism.[6] In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, there is a reference to a golden Liṅga which Rāvaṇa carried everywhere with him.[7] The Liṅga worship is eulogised in the *Mahābhārata* and it is said that such worship is most pleasing to Vṛṣabha-dhvaja.[8] Liṅga is

1. Banerjee, P., *op. cit.*, p. 39.
2. Mackay, E., *op. cit*, p. 61.
3. *ṚV*, vii. 21. 5.
4. *ṚV*, X. 99. 3.
5. Benerjee, P., *op. cit.*, p. 41
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Rām*,, VII. 31. 38.
8. *Mbh.*, VII. 172. 87 and 90.

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extolled in the *Anuśāsana-parvan*[1] and certain verses of this chapter, not included in the critical edition, mention Liṅga with the sign of *bhaga*.[2] P. Banerjee writes :[3] "In the *Anuśāsana-parvan*, we are told that Kṛṣṇa proceeded to the Himalayas to propitiate Śiva to have a son for Jāmbavatī through his (Śiva's) grace. On his way, Kṛṣṇa met Upamaṇyu, an ardent devotee of Śiva, who acquainted him with the glories and attributes of the god (Śiva). To test his devotion, Mahādeva appeared before Upamanyu in the guise of Indra and offered to grant him a boon of his choice. The devoted Upamanyu refused to accept a favour from any god other than Mahādeva and dwelt at length on the various attributes of Śiva and the reasons as to why he was regarded as the supreme creator. The following lines from Upamanyu's speech are very significent in this connection :

'Is Īśa (Mahādeva) the cause of causes for any other reasons ? We have not heard that the Liṅga of any other person is worshipped by the gods... He whose Liṅga Brahmā, Viṣṇu and then (Indra), with the deities, continually worship is therefore the most eminent. Since children have neither the mark of the lotus (Brahmā's), nor of the discus (Viṣṇu's), nor of the thunderbolt (Indra's), but are marked with the male and the female organs, therefore, offsprings are derived from Maheśvara. All women produced from the nature of Devī as their cause are marked with the female organ and all males are manifestly marked with the Liṅga of Hara.[4] "In the *Mahābhārata* thus the Linga has been given divine importance. It is said in the *Anuśāsana parvan* that Mahādeva's Liṅga is the most eminent because it is his Liṅga which is continually worshipped by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Indra and other gods.[5] The argument for Mahādeva's

1. *Mbh*,, XIII. 14. 100-102.
2. Majumdar, A. K., *Concise History of Ancient India*, Vol. III, p. 617.
3. Banerjee, P., *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42.
4. *Mbh.*, XIII. 14. 129 ff.
5. *Ibid.*, XIII. 21. 64—*na śuśruma ynd anyasya liṅgam abhyarchyate suraiḥ*, 'we have not heard that the Liṅga of any other person is worshipped by the gods.'

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greatness in this form is based on the fact that as children bear neither the mark of the lotus (the symbol of Brahmā), nor of the discus (the symbol of Viṣṇu), nor of the thunderbolt (the symbol of Indra), but are marked with the male and female organs, they originate from Mahādeva and the Devī, his consort. The women, produced from the nature of the Devī, are marked with the female organ, and the males are marked with the Liṅga of Siva.[1] At another place, the *Anuśāsana-parvan* mentions : "When his (Mahādeva's) Liṅga remains constantly in a state of chastity, and people reverence it, this is agreeable to the great god. The constant worshipper of Liṅga, who shall worship the image (vigraha) or the Liṅga of the great (god), enjoys great prosperity. It is the Linga raised up which the Ṛṣīs, gods, Gandharvas and Apsaras worship."[2] It is thus quite evident that the Liṅga worship was widely prevalent among the Āryans in the Epic times.

References to the Liṅga worship are found abundantly in the Purāṇas as well. There occurs an account of the fiery Linga of Mahādeva in the *Liṅga Purāṇa*[3], which sprang up before Brahmā and Viṣṇu while they fought for supremacy. Both of them (i.e. Brahmā and Viṣṇu) were put to shame as, even after travelling for a thousand years in each direction, neither could approach its termination. The sacred monosyllable 'Oṁ' visible on the Liṅga enlightend Brahmā and Viṣṇu and they acknowledged and eulogised the superior might and glory of Śiva. The story is, however, narrated with slight variations in the *Śiva Purāṇa* as well;[4] of course the fundamental facts remain essentially the same. The texts depict how controversy arose between Brahmā and Viṣṇu, each claiming his superiority over the other;

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1. *Ibid.*, XIII. 19. 78 : *puṁliṅgaṁ sarvaṁ Iśānaṁ strīliṅgaṁ viddhichāpy Umāṁ, dvābhyāmtanubhyāṁ vyāptaṁ hi charācharaṁ idaṁ jagat* II
'Know every thing which is male to be Iśāna and all that is female to be Umā; for this whole world, movable and immovable, is pervaded by (these) 'two bodies'.
2. Muir, *OST*, p. 144.
3. *Liṅga Purāṇa*, Chapters XVII and XVIII.
4. *Śiva Purāṇa*, Chapter X.

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consequent upon which an all pervading and mysterious Liṅga was observed by them. The Liṅga is associated in the same description with Śiva and it is remarked that the Liṅga-worship was established among the people since then.[1] It is significant that the Purāṇas refer distinctly to the worship of Liṅga. The *Vāyu Purāṇa*[2] and the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*[3] contain the evidence of the emergence of Liṅga, but do not bear any reference to Śiva-Liṅga as an objeet of worship. In these Purāṇas, the Liṅga is used as a symbol of Śiva.[4] The *Liṅga Purāṇa* provides an interesting account of what the Liṅga really means and states that the Liṅga, is called the Pradhāna (nature) and Parameśvara is called Liṅgin (the sustainer of the Liṅga)[5] and relates that the pedestal of the Liṅga is Mahādevī and that the Liṅga is Maheśvara himself, and it is so called because it makes him imperceptible (to the mortal eye).[6] Thus, the Epic-Purāṇic tradition reveals that the phallic worship came to be clothed with a mystic and philosophical meaning and recognised as an inseparable part of the Śaiva cult in the neo-Brahmanic society.[7] In the *Vāmana Purāṇa*, the Liṅga-worship is stated to have been recommended by Brahmā and Viṣṇu for the people belonging to the four castes.[8] The Tāntrik texts prescribe daily worship of the Śiva-Liṅga for the members of the four castes.[9] It is said that if they fail to do so, those of the three upper castes will be reduced to the position of the Chaṇḍālas, while the Śūdras will be born as boar in their next life.[10] All these references

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1. *Liṅga Purāṇa*, XX. 15. *Śiva Purāṇa*, X. 37.
2. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Ch. LV, 21.
3. *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, ch. XVI. 21.
4. Jash, P., *op. cit.*, p. 9.
5. *Liṅga-Purāṇa*, Ch. XVII. 5 : (*Pradhānaṁ Liṅgamākhyātaṁ Lingicha Parameśvaraḥ.*
6. *Ibid.*, Ch. XVIII. : '*Linga vedi Mahādevī śākṣād Maheśvaraḥ*'.
7. Banerjee, P , *op. cit.*, p. 43.
8. *Vāmana Purāṇa*, Chs. V and VI.
9. *Lingārchchana Tantra, Prānatoṣan Tantra*, p. 331.
10. *Ibid.*

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embodied in the Epic and the Purāṇas attest to the wide prevalence of the Liṅga-worship in ancient times.

R. G. Bhandarkar held that the Linga-worship had not come into vogue at the time of Patañjali and it was unknown even in the time of Wima Kadphises.[1] In support of his argument, he remarked, "Patañjali in his commentary on the Pāṇinian sūtra, V, 3.99, refers to the image of Śiva and not his Liṅga as an object of adoration. On the coins of Wima Kadphises, who was a devout worshipper of Śiva, there is the anthropomorphic representation of Śiva either with the trident or the bull, but the phallus is conspicuous by its absence,[2] D. R. Bhandarkar also held more or less similar view.[3] He writes to say, "On the coins of these foreign rulers, however, the figure of Śiva has no significance except as the object of worship, and yet we find on them not a Liṅga but a regular representation of Śiva. This clearly shows that up to the time of the Kushan King Vāsudeva at any rate, Śiva worship had not come to be identified with Liṅga worship.'[4] Further, he assigned the Guḍimallam Liṅga to the early 4th century A D. and observed that it was in the beginning of the Gupta period that the Liṅga worship was being foisted on the Śiva cult,[5] and also remarked : "And even here, it is worthy of note, you do not see a mere Liṅga, but also a standing figure of Śiva attached to it in front show ing elearly that even in this period the representation of Śiva was not entirely forgotten and was not completely supplanted by Liṅga."[6]

But it is difficult to agree with the above mentioned theories of Bhandarkara in the light of the facts that have come to our knowledge. As early as the 3rd millennium B. C. in the Indus Valley period, we

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1. Bhandarkar, R. G., *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 115.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Bhandarkar, D. R., *Lectures on Ancient Indian Numismatics*, pp. 19-20.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
6. *Ibid.*

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have phallic emblems as well as ring-stone regarded as Yonī pedestals. Liṅga worship with the Śiva cult appears to have been widely prevalent at least from the second or probably from the 3rd century B.C. even if we question the historical value of the *Anuśāsana Parvan* as an evidence of the existence of the Liṅga worship prior to the Christian era.[1] Moreover, the Guḍimallam Liṅga itself cannot be dated as late as the 4th century A.D.[2] Close similarity between the figure of Śiva on the Guḍimallam Liṅga and the figure of Yakṣa at Sāñchī is obvious. In view of this, the Guḍimallam Liṅga can be dated in the 2nd or 1st century B. C., suggesting clearly that the Liṅga worship was associated with the Śiva cult as early as the second-first century B. C.[3]

We get some very intersting details with regard to the shape and proportions of the Śiva-Liṅga in Varāhamihira's *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*.[4] According to this work, "The periphery of the round (uppermost) portion of the Liṅga, measured lengthwise, should be divided into three parts; the lowermost portion should be square, the middle one octagonal and above that circular. The square section must be placed in a hole dug out in the ground and the middle one (octagonal) into that (cut) in the pedestal (only the circular section being visible); (in diameter or extent) the pedestal on all the sides of the hole should be equal to the height of the visible (topmost cylindrical) section"[5] It is further stated that a Liṅga, lean and long beyond proportion, short of its sides and injured at the top was supposed to spell ruin to the country, town and its master respectively."[6]

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1. Banerjee, P, *op, cit.*, p. 43.
2. Coomarswamy, A. K., *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 27. Gudimallam is a village 10 kms. to the north-east of Renigunta railway junction.
3. Grunwedel, *Buddhist Art in India* (translated by Gibson & Burgess), p. 5.
4. Shastri, A.M, *India as seen in the Bṛhatsaṁhitā of Varāhamihira*, p. 136.
5. *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*, Ch. LVII. 53-54,
   Liṅgasya Vṛttaparidhim dairdhayeṇāsūtrya tat tridha vibhajet I
   Mūle tachchaturasraṁ madhye tvaṣṭāśri vṛttam ataḥ II
   Chaturasramavanikhāte madhyaṁ kārya tu piṇḍikāśvabhre I
   dṛśyorhchhayeṇa sama samanteraḥ piṇḍikāśvabhrāt II
6. *Ibid.*, Ch LVII. 55.

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Among the Śaivas, there has been an important sect, that of the Lakulīśa-Pāśupatas, which, as attested by the Bhagalpur Copper Plate Grant of the Pāla ruler Nārāyaṇapāla,[1] was prevalent in Bihar also. The doctrine of the Pāśupata sect has been explained by Mādhava in his *Sarvadarśan asaṁgraha* written in the latter half of the 14th century A. D. The Lakulīśa-Pāśupatas belong to one of the improtant branches of the Pāśupatas in the early mediaeval India. They signify their distinctiveness by ascribing the theory of incarnation to Śiva. The belief in the incarnation of Śiva is not to be found among the other schools of Śaivism, e. g. the Mattamayūras or Kapālikas, Kālāmukhas, Liṅgāyatas, etc Just as the *Laghyabhāgavatāmṛta* mentions twenty-four incarnations of Viṣṇu, similarly the Lakulīśa-Pāśupatas attribute eighteen or twenty-eight incarnat ons to Śiva in different ages. However, due to non-availability of the Lakulīśa-Pāśupata works,[2] the names of the incarnations of Śiva have to be gathered from inscriptions and literary works or writers like Āchārya Haribhadra, Mādhava and Rājaśekharasūrī. In this respect, the Cintra Praśasti, composed during the period A. D. 1274 to 1296, is of considerable importance.[3] In its introductory verses, it speaks of the founder of the sect as an incarnation of Śiva. It says that the god "descended (*avatarat*) in the from of Bhaṭṭāraka Śrī-Lakulīśa in order to favour the universe, and in order to favour the sons of Uluka, who were for a long time without sons in consequence of a curse laid upon (his father). Having come to the Lāṭa country (Gujarat), he settled (*adhyavāsa*) for the performance of special Pāśupats vows, his four pupils, Kuśika, Gargya, Kauruṣa and Maitreya, whose class spread out into four branches."

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1. *IA*, Vol. XV.
2. The only work of the Lakulīśa Pāśupata system available till now is the *Gaṇakārikā*. That there existed more works on this branch of Śaivism is known from the commentary on the *Gaṇakārikā* and *Sarvadarśanasaṁgraha*.
3. The record in question, the so-called Cintra Praśasti, is so named because the stone which bears the inscription was removed to Cintra in Portugal, but it seems to have originally belonged to a Śaiva temple at Somnatha-Pattan in Kathiawad.

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In an inscription from the Ekalingaji temple near Udaipur in Mewar-called in the record itself "a temple of Lakulīśa", which is dated in A. D. 971-72, already mentions the incarnation of Śiva as Lakulīśa.[1] Unfortunately this record is somewhat mutilated at vital points but still the following facts can be gleaned from the study of the record. Verse 9 of the inscription mentions Bhṛgukachcha (Broach) and says that the sage Bhṛgu, who has been cursed by Viṣṇu, propitiated Śiva. Verse 10 mentions the Lāṭa country and the river Narbada and says that, in the presence of the sage himself, Śiva descended into a bodily form (*Kāyāvataram pratyāgrahit*) in which he was charactarised by having a club in his hand (*lakul-opalakṣitakaraḥ*). Verse 11 mentioning a town named Kāyāvarohaṇa, perhaps says that it was so-called because the incarnation took place there, or perhaps says that thereafter the god became attached to that place, so much so that he thought no more of the abode Kailāśa. And verse 13 mentions Kuśika 'and others' who practised the Pāśupta *yoga*. Thus, according to the Cintra Praśasti and the Ekalingaji temple inscription, Lakulīśa incarnated at a place called Kārohaṇa or Kāyāvarohaṇa. Kārohaṇa has been identified as kāyāvarohaṇa. A chapter in the *Kārāvana-māhātmya*, a work of unknown date, mentions a story according to which Lakulīśa was born as a son of Viśvarāja in the family of sage Atri.[2] It also glorifies Kāyārohaṇa to be a *tīrtha* as sacred as Vārāṇasi and Prayāga and gives its name in different ages, e. g. Ichhāpurī in the Kṛta era, Māyāpurī in the Tretā era, Meghavatī in the Dvāpara and Kāyāvarohaṇa in the Kali age. Kāyārohaṇa has been indentified as Kārāvan, a town in the Dabhoi Taluka of the Baroda State, now in Gujarat.[3]

The Lakulīśa-Pāśupata concept thus took form apparently in Gujarat, since Lakulīśa is taken to have been born at Kāyāvarohaṇa, the present village of Kārvān near Baroda. The Lakulīsa-Pāśupata sect, which apparently took its genesis in Gujarat, became so popular

1. Bhandarkar, D. R. in *JBBRAS*, Vol. XXII, pp. 151 ff.
2. *JRAS*., 1926, p. 108.
3. Ray, H. C., *Dynastic History of Northern India*, Vol. II, p. 1171, f. n 3.

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in the period between the 10th and the 13th centuries A. D. as to find mention in inscriptions of different parts of India. His doctrine was taught by Muninātha Chilluka who is referred to in an inscription at Hemavtī in Mysore dated 943 A D.,[1] by Lakulīśvara Paṇḍita referred to in an inscription of Belagami in Mysore dated 1035 A. D.,[2] by certain asceties called upholders of Lakulagāmasamaya (i. e. the system based upon a work of Lakulin) referred to in the inscription dated 1177 A. D.,[3] Nāgaśiva Paṇḍita referred to in an inscription dated 1183 A. D.,[4] Bammadeva, the son of Nāgarṣī, the promoter of the system, based upon the work of Lakulin, referred to in an inscription dated 1199 A. D.,[5] a Vāgī-Lakula or one who upheld the system of the learned Lakulin referred to in the inscription dated 1213 A. D.[6]

It is, however, difficult to say as to when exactly the Lakulīśa-Pāśupata school was founded. The inscriptions which refer to the incarnation of Śiva as Lakulīśvara or Nakulīśvara are comparatively late. The earliest mention of it is found in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*.[7] Though large portions of the Purāṇa could have been comopsed even long before the commencement of the Christian era in the 5th or 4th century B. C.,[8] it appears to have reached its final shape during the Gupta period.

R. G. Bhandarkar is, therefore, of opinion that if the *Vāyu Purāṇa* was put together in the beginning of the 4th century A. D., the incarnation of Śiva as Lakulīśa, to become a general belief and come to be spoken about the Purāṇa, must be placed as early as the

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1. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. XII, p. 92.
2. *IA*, 1901, NI, Vol. IV, p. 225.
3. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. V, pt. i. p. 135.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Ch. 23. 261.
8. Dikshitar, R. R., *Some Aspects of Vāyu Purāṇa*, p. 49.

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first century A.D. at the latest.[1] Thus, the belief in the incarnation of Śiva as Lakulīśa may go back to a period even earlier to the commencement of the Christian era. The *Liṅga Purāṇa* represents Maheśvara having told Brahmā that at the time of Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana, during the twenty-eighth repetition of the Yugas, he could incarnate himself as a Brahmachārin by the name of Lakulīśa.[2]

Lakulīśa was a historical personality like the Buddha or Mahāvīra and not Śiva as Burgess thinks.[3] He appeared on the earth as a great Śiva ascetic teacher, who carried a club in his hands and so came to be known as Lakulīn. He preached a new manifestation of Śiva as Lakulīśa, 'the Lord who bears the club.' This teacher might have subsequently identified himself with the God and in course of time came to be known as an incarnation of the god Śiva. R.G. Bhandarkar[4] thinks, that a person of the name of Lakulin or Lakulīśa founded a Śaiva system corresponding to the Pāñcharātra system, which the *Vāyu* and the *Liṅga Purāṇas* consider to be contemporaneous with it. The other general name Pāśupata arose by dropping the name of the human individual Lakulin, and substituting that of the God Paśupati, whose incarnation he was believed to be, as is done in the texts of the *Mahābhārata*. The figure of Lakulīśa was anthropomorphised as a god with two arms and holding a club in one of his hands. J. N. Banerjea[5] also identifies such images as those of Lakulīśa, the founder of the Lakulīśa Pāśupata sect. An inscription on the base of a stone pillar, dated in the year 61 of the Gupta era (hence belonging to the time of Chandragupta II Vikramāditya) contains a three eyed human figure holding a club in the right hand and an unidentified object in the left shown akimbo. It may, therefore, be noted that

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1. Bhandarkar, R. G., *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, pp 116-17.
2. *Liṅga Purāṇa*, Ch. 24-129.
3. *ASWI*, pl. 37, fig. 1.
4. Bhandarkar, R. G., *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 120.
5. Banerjea, J. N. *DHI*, p. 265.

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either Lakulīśa was not the founder of the Pāśupata sect, if the sect is said to exist in the time of Patañjali, who refers to them as Śiva Bhāgavatas, or it is possible that Lakulīśa was responsible more for the growth of the cult than for its origin which was earlier. Śrīkaṇṭha may have been responsible for this.[1]

This Pāśupata sect was certainly one of the oldest forms of Śaivism which was prevalent in Northern India and it continued during the Gupta and early mediaeval periods. Varāhamihira (6th century A.D.) refers to the Pāśupatas and so also the Chinese traveller Hiuen-Tsiang[2] (7th century A.D.) had mentioned the Pāśupatas several times.

As already noticed, the Pāśupata Śaivism has been mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*;[3] but there was no reference whatsoever to Lakulīśa in it. A study of the *Sarvadarśana Saṁgraha* by Mādhava makes it evident that it was Lakulīśa who was the founder of this sect. This view is confirmed by no less than eight inscriptions obtained from Mysore in which Lakulīśa has been mentioned as the founder of the Pāśupata sect. Of the eighteen incarnations of Śiva, Lakulīśa was among them and he is regarded as being contemporary of Śrī Kṛṣṇa'[4]

That the Lakulīśa-Pāśupata sect was followed in Bihar seems to be suggested by certain archaeological evidences. The Bhagalpur Copper Plate Grant of the Pāla ruler Nārāyaṇapāla attests that the Pāśupata sect of Śaivism was prevalent in Bihar. There was a council of the Pāśupata Āchāryas for the worship of the image of Śiva which was installed by Nārāyaṇapāla himself.[5]

In accordence with the tradition recorded iu the *Mahābhārata*,[6] the Pāśupata doctrines were first preached by Śiva Śrīkaṇṭha. In the

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1. Verma, B. S., *Socio-Economic, Religious and Literary Condition of Bihar*, p. 116.
2. Watters, II, pp. 229. 242, 251; Vol. I, pp. 296, 331, etc.
3. *Mahābhārata, Śāntiparvan,*
4. *Vāyu Purāṇa*. ch. 23, 217-27; *Liṅga Purāṇa*, 2-24; 124-32.
5. *IA*, XV, p. 307.
6. *Mbh. Śāntiparvan*, Ch. 64-7.

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opinion of R. G. Bhandarkar[1], this Śiva-Śrikaṇṭha was probably a human teacher. His view seems to be confirmed by a passage of the *Piṅgalāmāla*[2] which says that Bhagavāna Śrīkaṇṭha was the author of that work. Lakulīśa was probably his disciple and these two were responsible for the foundation of the Pāśupata sect. Lakulīśa had four disciples; Kuśika, Garga, Mitra and Kaurušya, and they lived about the generation before the time of Chandragupta II.[3] R.G. Bhandarkar, however, placed Lakulīśa in the time of Patañjali, who for the first time speaks about the Śiva-Bhāgavatas.[4] But it is not possible to accept the view of Bhandarkar as the Mathura inscription belonging to the time of Chandragupta II Vikramāditya would place Lakulīśa in the 2nd century A. D. D. R. Bhandarkar has assigned the date of Lakulīśa in the first half of the 2nd century A.D.[5] J.N. Banerjea[6] also conceded to it.

Two main reasons may be ascribed for the popularity of the Lakulīśa Pāśupata sect. Firstly, it was a sect of wide catholicity catering to the taste and capacity of the different classes of people. It was a religion which the ascetics as well as the lay men could profess. Achārya Haribhadra, in his *Sadadarśanasamuchchaya*, remarks that the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas 'worship that form of the Almighty contemplated by the ancient sages where there is neither the celestial river, cobras, the garland of skulls, the digits of the moon, Pārvatī, matted hair, ashes, nor anything else. He, God Śiva, alone is to be resorted to by the ascetics. Those who are covetous of pleasure of a kingdom, meditate upon and worship him."[7] There was no restriction for the married people to profess the religion. Among the followers of the system, there

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1. Bhandarkar, R. G., *op. cit.*
2. Bagchi, *Studies in the Tantra*, Vol. I, p. 106.
3. *EI*, XXI. p. 5.
4. Bhandarkar, R. G., *op. cit.* p. 166.
5. *EI.* XXI, p. 7.
6. Banerjee J. N., DHI
7. Referred to in the *Gaṇakārikā* (*GOS*, p. 29).

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were both the married and unmarried ones. (*ātithyakama-nirtāḥ sastrīkāḥ nistrīkāsteṣūtamāḥ*). The best asceties were, of course, those who were celibates. Any one devoted to Śiva might take a vow and become a Bharata. For becoming a Bharata, it was not necessary that he should be a Brāhmin.[1]

Bharatādīnāṁ vratagrahaṇe brāhmanādivarṇa niyamo nāsti I
Yasya tu Śive bhāktiḥ sa vratı bharatādirabhavet II

Rājaśekharasūrī confirms the opinion of Āchārya Haribhadra.[2]

Bharatānoṁ vratādāne varnavyaktirṇa kachana I
Yasya punaḥ Śive bhaktirvrati sa bharato bhavet II

The second reason for the popularity of the Lakulīśa-Pāśupata sect might have been the popular character of the religious system. Mādhava in his *Sarvadarśanasaṁgraha* says that *hāsya, nṛtya, gīta* were to be performed at the time of meditation. The music was to be tuned in time according to the *Gandharvaśāstrā*, and the subject was to be the qualities of Śiva. In the historionic art, attention was to be given to the movement of limbs of the body as well as the thought contents of the drama.[3]

The Lakulīśa-Pāśupatas maintained their individuality by their dress, by their philosophy and by their method of worship. Like other Śaiva ascetics, they used to smear their body with ashes, wear lion cloth, keep matted hair and wear sacred thread. But unlike others, they used black dress.[4] They followed the Vaiśeṣika school of philosophy, whereas the Śaivites were guided by the Nāiyāyikadarśana. Not later than 900 A. D., the identity of the Lakulīśa-Pāśupatas became separate from the other Śiva worshippers, known as Śaivas. The distinction between the names Śaiva Pāśupata became so much wide that Bhāṣkarāchārya, Aparārka and others recognised the diffe-

1. *GOS*, Vol. XV. p. 30.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
3. *Ibid.*, p 33.
4. Ekalingaji Temple Inscription, dated 971-72 A. D.

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rences. Bhāskarāchārya, who is placed some time between 850 A.D. and 950 A. D., mentions four sects of the Maheśvara[1] Pāśupatas. Śaivas, Kapālikas and Kathaka Sidhāntins. Aparārka, who flourished about 1125 A.D., differentiates between the Śaivas and the Pāśupatas.[2] The Śrāvaṇabelagola inscription of Mallisena (1129 A. D.) mentions the Śaivas, Pāśupatas, Kapālikas and Kapilas.[3] The Lakulīśa-Pāśupata also differed according to Haribhadra,[4] from the Mahāvratadhara and Kālāmukha. Bhandarkar seems to be incorrect when he says that 'Lakula was the general name by which the Śiva sects were called and the specific name Kālāmukha is associated with the general name in one case.[5]

The method of worship of Paśupati by the Lakulīśa-Pāśupatas is described in the *Ṣadadarśanasamuchchaya* and *Gaṇakārikā*. The lay worshippers are to recite "salutations to Śiva" with their folded hands. But an elaborate procedure is prescribed for the naked bachelor ascetic who is the best. The latter is engaged in the performance of five fires (*pañchāgniśādhaṇāparāḥ*). After worshipping and cleaning his teeth and feet and performing ablutions in the morning, he is to smear his body with ashes and meditate on Śiva : '*etai pratardanta pādādi-śauchaṁ vidhāya śivaṁ dhyāyanto bhaṣmanaṅga triṣṭiḥ spṛśanti.*' In the noon and evening after worshipping the god they should smear the body with ashes carefully and then bathe. Then he should proceed gradually towards the '*garbhagṛha*'. On the right of the image he should be kneeling on ground and placing the hands on the chest visualise Śiva and meditate. At the time of meditation on Śiva, he should laugh loudly. Then he should sing and dance. Then he should sit in the manner indicated above, meditate on Śiva and do *hudukkara* bow down and do *Japa*. Again he should take deep breath thrice while laughing, go round thrice at the time of dance, and perform

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1. *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, p. 127.
2. Commentary on Yājñavalkya, p. 11.
3. *EI*, Vol, III; p. 192.
4. *GOS*, Vol. XV, p. 30.
5. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. V, pt, i, p. 135.

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thrice *hudukkara*, and six times salutations. While coming out of the *garbhagṛha*, he should salute, go round the deity thrice, and do *japa*. Bathing in a lonely place, he should also salute in order of succession all the Tīrthaṅkaras like Lakulīśa and Rasikara, and go round each of them. The place selected for meditation should be examined in the morning and removed of dirt and impurites. When darkness descends, the site should be cleaned with the end of a piece of cloth and purified with the ashes. Then in the midst of drowsiness and awakening, he should utter the *mantras* or formulae and perform *Krathana*, *spandanam* and *maṇḍanam*. Rudra should thus be worshipped.[1]

The author as well as the commentator of the *Gaṇkāṇrika* clearly say that the '*guru*'[2] or teacher is necessary for an ascetic. Unless a disciple is initiated by the *guru*, the former cannot worship in the right way and win salvation.

It may, however, be noted that one of the images of Lakulīśa, the propounder of the Pāśupata sect, has been found at Benisagar in the district of Singhbum. This shows that the cult of Lakulīśa Pāśupata had penetrated in Bihar as far as the Adivasi tract of Chotanagpur as one proselytising movement to spread Brahmanic religion in this tract.[3]

Another Śaiva sect Muṇḍī, who used to shave their hairs, also flourished in the period in Bihar as Sarahapa refers to Muṇḍī as well.[4]

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1. Commentary on the Śloka no. 7 of *Gaṇakārikā Tantra dīrghochchhi astrayaṁ yavaddhansitam, daṇḍakatri-ravntarnam yavadgītanṛtya, gambhīra-hudukkaratrayam, ṣaṣṭhi namaskāram.*
2. *Gaṇakārika*, Śloka nos. 2-3.
3. *JBRS*, Vol. XLII, pp. 1 ff. Verma, B. S., *op. cit.*, pp. 116-17
4. *Ibid*,, p. 117, Sāṅkrityāyana, *Dohākośa*, p. 2, v. 5, *Raṇḍī-muṇḍī annavi besen.*

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CHAPTER II

ŚIVA ON COINS AND SEALS

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Coins as well as seals are of considerable importance for they help us in no uncertain degree in reconstructing the history of Śaivism in Bihar. The earliest representations of Śiva, both symbolic and anthropomorphic, are, however, to be found on some of the punch-marked and tribal coins in ancient India. Śaiva symbols like the *liṅgam*, the bull (the *vāhana* of Śiva), trident (*triśūla*), battle-axe (paraśu), tree-in-railing, etc., are depicted on the coins of the Agaras, Audumbaras, Ārjunāyanas, Kunindas, Mālavas, Śibis, Yaudhayas, etc., but Śiva in anthropomorphic form is also found represented on certaln of the tribal coins attesting to the great popularity of the god in Northern India at a very early period.

Liṅgas occur as coin devices in centuries before the Christian era. Allan has described an uninscribed cast coin of third-second century B.C. in the following words :[1] 'Obv. Building (?) on the left, tree in the centre, on right, female figure to left. Rev. tree in railing on left, *linga* on square pedestal on right'.[2] J. N. Banerjea[3] is of opinion that the representation of Liṅga may be seen on two square copper coins[4] (3rd-2nd century B. C.) which may perhaps be attributed to Taxila. The pedestal on which the Liṅga stands has been summarily

1. Allan, J., *CCAI*, p. LXXVIII.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 85, pt. XI. coin no. 2.
3. Banerjea. J. N., *DHI*. p. 125.
4. Allan J., *op. cit*, p. 233, coin nos. 154 and 155.

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represented. Allan recognises a Liṅga on a pedestal between two different trees in railing on Ujjayini coins[1] (3rd-2nd century B.C,). It may also be noted that there is probably a Liṅga on a square pedestal represented in the centre of a punch-marked coin.[2]

Not only symbolical, there are also anthropomorphic representations of Śiva on the coins. He seems to appear in human form on certain of the punch-markcd coins, where he has been represented as standing. 'Representations of human figures or deities', as pointed out by Allan,[3] 'but are occasionally found'. One of the most remarkable representations seems to be on a punch-marked coin[4], which depicts the human figure or a deity in anthropomorphic form, with a pot and a staff in his two hands and a crest-like thing over the head, which has been identified as Kārttikeya by P. K. Agrawala;[5] but, in view of the objects held in the hands of the figurs, it would be more appropriate to regard the deity to be Śiva. A figure identical to this found on the copper coins attributed to Ujjayini has been identified by J. N. Banerjea as that of Śiva.[6]

On the Ujjayini coins, class 2, 'is a deity whom we have identified as Kārttikeya, since he holds a spear;[7] on variety 1, he is shown with three heads,[8] the other three heads are behind[9], and naturally not represented, because they cannot be seen, so that he is six-headed, which identifies him as Kārttikeya'. On class 3, we have a very crude representation of the god,[10] while the deity is represented on class 5. variety also. The figure has, however, doubtfully been identified as

1. *Ibid.*, p. 243, no. 19, pl. XXXVI, no. 15.
2. *Ibid.*, pl. V. no. 21.
3. *Ibid.* p. XXXVI.
4. Agrawala, P. K., *Skanda-Kārttikeya*, p. 38, fig. 1.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Banerjea, J. N., *Religion in Art and Archaeology*, p. 45.
7. Allan, J, *op cit*, pp. CXLI-CXLII, pls, XXXVII and XXXVIII, 19-21.
8. *Ibid*, pp. CXLIII and 25. pl. XXXVIII. 22.
9. *bid.*, p. CXLIII.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. CXLIII and 253, pls. XXVII. 5.7 and XIX. 4, 6, 8, 9.

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that of Kārttikeya by Allan, for though in the body of the catalogue he refers to the figures as Kārttikeya or simply as a deity, he remarks that the figure may stand for both Śiva and Kārttikeya.[1]

Cunningham has identified the figure to be that of Śiva Mahākāla.[2] Not only that, even J. N. Banerjea is disposed to identify the figure to be that of Śiva and not of Kārttikeya. He says that the standing figure carrying staff and vase cannot be called Kārttikeya, but should be described as Śiva, because the three heads of the figure cannot be taken to represent partially the six heads of Kārttikeya, as the six headed figures of Kārttikeya on the indigenous coins, and the three headed Śiva figures are known from the Kushan coins.[3] Agrawala, however, says that the remark may hold good so far the identification of the deity with a trident and standing by the side of a bull on another variety of the Ujjayini coins is concerned, but on the basis of this identification, it would not be justifiable to identify the other depictions as Śiva, despite all the dissimilarities of the attributes and forms of the deities.[4] In this connection, special interest is attached to variety 1 of class 2 Ujjayini coins which shows the bull looking up at the deity. This, according to J. N. Banerjea, corroborates the description embodied in the *Matsya Purāṇa* that Śiva's mount should be shown in the attitude of looking up at the god.[5] It may be added in this connection that in this variety, we also find the representation of the Śiva Liṅga on the top of the tree-in-railing, thus combining the phallic, theriomorphic and anthropomophic forms of the god on one and the same specimen.

On some of the coins from Ujjayini, we notice a human figure standing with his left hand raised up and the right one resting on the hip. On one such coin, the deity is shown standing beside a trident (*triśūla*), which clearly establishes his identity with Śiva. The tiny

1. *Ibid.*, pp. CXLIII and 245-52.
2. Cunningham, A., *CAI*, pp, 97-98 pl, X, 16. 1-5,
3. Banerjea. J. N., *DHI*, pp. 117. 141,
4. Agrawala, P. K. *op. cit.* p. 40
5. Shastri, A. M., *Seminar Papers on the Local Coins of Northern India*, p. 74.

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human figure standing with hands stretched in a line appearing on another Ujjayini coin may also stand for Śiva. A.S. Altekar and D.B. Diskalkar described the standing human figure appearing on the obverse of Class I, variety F of the Kasarwad hoard of coins as Kārttikeya holding *śakti*. But the figure is not quite clear; the association of the deity with the bull, however, seems to indicate his identity with Śiva.[1] A cast coin from the same hoard contains a trident and a human figure, and, as suggested by Altekar and Diskalkar, they may have a reference to the deity Mahākāla of Ujjain and his attributes.

In this connection it may be noted that a coin from Mahismati represents a male figure with a halo behind the head, having the right hand lowered and the left one raised up, most probably represening Śiva. for the figure resembles considerably with the one found on some Ujjayini coins when Śiva is shown with his left hand resting on the hip, and also associated with a *triśūla*.[2] A coin from Tripuri (Madhya Predesh) also shows a human figure standing under an arched canopy. The figure may be identified as that of Śiva.

On some round cast copper coins, bearing the legend *kaḍasa* in early Brāhmī characters assignable to the latter half of the 3rd or early 2nd century B. C.,[3] among others, there is a rudely carved human figure carrying a staff in the left hand,[4] and what appears to be a water-vessel[5] in the right hand.[6] Allan draws our attention to the resemblance between this figure and a similar one represented on the Ujjayini coins and suggests his identifieation with Kārttikeya;[7]

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
2. *JBPP*, Vol. II, pp. 88.
3. Allan. J., *op. cit.*, p. xcii. In the body of the Catalogue (p. 145), these coins are assigned to the 3rd century B. C. Cunningham describes the characters of the legend as Aśokan (*CAI*, p. 62).
4. Allan, J., *op cit.*, p, 146, pl. IX. 17. 19.
5. The object in the right hand is not mentioned in the Catalogue; but in the Introduction to the book, it is described as a small bag, *Ibid.*, p. xciii.
6. *Ibid.*, pl. XIX, 17. 19.
7. *Ibid.*

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but, as Motichandra describes, the corresponding figure on the Ujjayini coins should be identified as Śiva, as the staff and the water-vessel (*kamaṇḍalu*) are especially associated with him. Consequently the figures on the Kaḍa coins may also be taken as one of the earliest representations of Śiva on coins in human form so far as the historical period is concerned.[1]

The coins belonging to the Kunindas depict a male figure (Śiva), standing and facing a trident with axe-on-shaft in his right hand, with flower or star over his left shoulder. On certain coins, there is the figure of a deer on the reverse side and on the obverse is the figure of Śiva, clad in a short *dhotī*, holding a *triśūla* topped by *paraśu* in his right hand, the left hand being held in the *kaṭihasta* pose, from which hangs a striped object, which in the opinon of Cunningham is a tiger-skin.[2] The god has a *jaṭābhāra* type of headdress, which has considerable similarity with the *jaṭā* arranged over the head of Śiva carved on the Gudimalam Śiva-linga- He is facing to front and is generally in standing pose. The legend on the coin reads. '*Bhagavata Chhatreśvara Mahātmanaḥ.*' Chhatreśvara has identified him as Śiva.[3]

The Yaudheyas were the most prominent among the tribal republics, who also issued coins depicting Śiva on them. On the coins of the Yaudheyas, Śiva is shown on the reverse side three-headed, standing facing with the right hand raised and the left one resting on hip. Tree-in-railing on the right and arched symbol on the left are also shown. Copper coins of the Yaudheyas, which generally depict Kārttikeya on the obverse and a deer on the revrse are remarkable. On some occasions Kārttikeya is replaced by Śiva on the obverse and, instead of a deer, is found either a bull or a horse (in one unique case an ass or a mule) or a leopard on the reverse.[4] Under

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1. Shastri, A, M., *op. cit.*. p. 88.
2. *Bhāratīya Vidyā*. p. 45,
3. Majumdar, R. C. (Ed.), *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 161.
4. Dasgupta, K. K., *A Tribal History of Ancient India—A Numismatic Approach*, p. 205.

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this class, on variety L, one headed Śiva, holding trident, is depicted and veriety M depicts the same figure, but traces of some inscriptions are noticed. On some coins, Śiva is shown six-headed, standing. facing with the right hand raised, left on the hip, trident standing on the right.[1] Śiva with three heads, standing with a Chaitya on the left and tree on the right is depicted on the reverse of the Yaudheya coins.[2] The workmanship of these coins in not very artistic. These coins were issued during the 2nd century A. D.

The monarchical coins of Vatsa, with its headquarters at Kauśāmbī, bear the name of Rudra on one side and the figure of Śiva standing by the side of the bull on the other.[3]

Not only the anthropomorphic representations of the god, certain of the tribal coins of the Audumbaras are found representing even Śaiva shrines. Reference may be made to a kind of structre figuring on the reverse of the square copper coins of the Audumara chiefs Śivadāsa, Rudradāsa and Dharghosa.[4] There is divergence of opinion with regard to the nature of the structure. According to Cunningham, it is a pointed roofed temple of two or three storeys; with pillars,[5] while Allan describes it as a two storeyed, domed and pillared stūpa.[6] R. D. Banerji agreed with Cunningham.[7] K P. Jayaswal took the structure to stand for the mote hall of the Audumbaras or some other public building.[8] Coomarasawamy described the structure appearing on some Audumbara coins as a railed (circular ?) roof with projecting eaves.[9] The most plausible interpretation was, however, suggested by S V. Sohoni,[10] who invited our attention to a

1. Sharan, M. K., *Tribal Coins—A Study*, p. 116.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
3. Gupta, P. L. *Coins*, p. 40.
4. Allan, J. *op. cit.*, pls. xiv 15; xv. 1.5, 10.
5. Cunningam, A., *op. cit.*, p, 68.
6. Allan, J., *op. cit.*, p. Lxxxiii.
7. *JASB*, 1914, pp. 247-50.
8. Jayaswal, K. P., *Hindu Polity*, p, 159.
9. Coomarasawamy. A. K., *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 237.
10. *JNSI*, Vol. IV, pp. 54-57,

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passage in Bhāsa's *Pratimānātaka* showing that generally outside temples there were located weapons (*praharanas*) or flags (*dhvajas*) pointing to the identity of the divinty inside the temple and thought that the structure under consideration is a Śaiva shrine of the type still common in the Kulu and Beas Valleys. This suggestion is vouched for not only by the combined trident-battle-axe, a distinctive attribute of Śiva, beside the building, but also by the sectarian title Mahādeva,[1] i. e. worshipper of Mahādeva applied to the Audumbara chief. The representation of this temple is of great importance. For while we have some epigraphic records of the 2nd-1st centuries B. C. referring to the existence of the Vaiṣṇava temple, no inscriptional reference of so early a period are available with regard to Śaiva temples.[2] The Audumbara coins thus show that, like the Vaiṣṇava shrines, Śaiva temples with storeyed structures and some kind of spires also existed as early as the 2nd-1st century B. C. In these temples may certainly have been installed either images of Śiva in human form or the phallic emblem of the god.[3]

No doubt, the tribal and the republican coins bearing the effigies of Śiva or figures of Śaiva shrines, on which the preceding study is based, do not belong to Bihar proper; they, however, suggest the popularity of the god in pre-Christian era in Northern India of which Bihar forms a part, and, as such, it may not be unreasonable to mention that Bihar too shared the religious inclination as in other parts of Northern India.

Whether Bihar formed a part of the Kushan empire is difficult to say. But there are Chinese and Tibetan legends referring to Kaniṣka's successful expeditions against Pāṭaliputra (Patna), and this may point to the spread of the Kushan influence over Bihar. A large number of Kushan coins have also been found from different parts of

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1. The expression 'Mahādeva' on the Audmbara coins is also taken as the regal title, *JNSI.* XXVII, part II, p. 129.
2. Gopal, L., *Seminar Papers on the Tribal Coins of Ancient India*, p. 91
3. *Ibid*,, p, 92.

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the state. That the Kaniṣka (śaka) era was also in use in Bihar is proved by the discovery of an engraved vessel made of sandstone. According to D. C. Sircar, the palaeography of the record suggests that the era is none other than that used in the inscription of the Kushanas. This, according to D. C. Sircar, seems to be the only Kushan record so far discovered in Bihar, which bears a date in the Kaniṣka era. It is said that Kaniṣka took the great poet Aśvaghoṣa with him. All these indicate that the Kushanas may have their sway over Magadha, though for a short period.[1]

A large number of hoards containing the coins of the Kushan rulers from Wema Kadphises to Vāsudeva I have been found in the state.[2] To mention a few, the hoards of the Kushan coins have been found at Kumrahar and Sadargali at Patna, Belwaganj and Karra in the district of Ranchi, Sultanganj in the district of Bhagalpur, Mathia Puraria in the Gaya district, Chirand in the Saran district, Radhiya, Lauriya Nandangarh, Cherithan in the district of Champaran, Vaiśālī, Utara in the district of Darbhanga, Buxar in the district of Bhojpur, and Kusumbagan, Mahalia. Pindrabera and Rakha hills in the district of Singhbhum. These findspots indicate that the Kushan coins were widespread in Bihar. From Patna, the capital city of the state itself have been found at least three gold coins and one hundred and six copper coins of the Kushan rulers.[3]

Of all the deities that make their appearance on the Kushan coins, Śiva is the most popular for he figures very frequently on them with varieties of attributes and postures. The appearance of the Kushanas on the Indian horizon opens a new chapter in the study of the iconographic features. The Śaiva cult assumes various forms on their coins.[4] The early foreign rulers of India, namely Gondo-

1. Sahai, B. and Sahay, S. N. (Ed.), *Bihar Past and Present*. p. 7.
2. Sinha, B. P. (Ed.), *Ancient Bihar*, p. 22.
3. Devi, S. M. (Ed) *Pāṭaliputra Through the Ages*, pp. 16-17.
4. *JNSI*, Vol. XXX 1968, p. 195.

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phares[1] and Maues[2] issued coins with the effigies of Śiva on them.

Gardner has described the type appearing on the coins of Maues in the following words : 'Male figure l., chalmys flying behind, holds club and trident.'[3] The attributes being quite similar to those of the Śiva figure on the Sirkap seal,[4] it has been presumed that the figure on the coins of Maues is one of Śiva. Again, the word 'deva', while retaining its general sense, came to acquire a particular significence, i.e. 'the god Śiva'. Hence, the title '*devavrata*' given to Gondophares may be construed as 'Gondophares, devoted to god Śiva', which is supported by the presence of the figure of the divinity. However, the most noteworthy representations of Śiva are found on the coins of Wema Kadphises, Kaniṣka, Huviṣka and Vāsudeva. In the Kushan coins, the number of hands and head of Śiva not only multiply, but the attributes of varying nature are also noticed. The earliest representation of Śiva on the Kushan coins is found on the coins of Wema Kadphises, where the god is shown invariably two-armed. His right hand almost always holds a trident or a battle-axe trident, and the left hand is shown hanging downward and carrying a water vessel (*Kaamṇḍalu*) with the upper skin garment slinging round the forearm.[5] The treatment of the jatā over the head of the god differs in individual specimens, two modes being discernible, one where the matted locks are gathered together ending into a knot just on the head, while in the other mode, beneath it, is shown a convex shaped object which may be the hair treated in a fashion similar to that on the head of the god in the Chhatreśvara coins of the Kunindas.

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1. Whitehead, R. B., *PMC*, 1, p. 151, pl. XV. 43; Gardner, P, *The Coins*, *BMC*, p. 10 pl. XXII. 9.
2. Whitehead. R. B., *PMC*, I. p. 101. pl. X. 25; Banerjea, J. N., *DHI*, pp, 120-21.
3. Gardner, P., *op. cit.*, p. 71 pl, XVIII. 3,
4. Konow, S., *CII*, Vol. II p. 102.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

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But on the coins of Wema Kadphises and other Kushan kings, Śiva is sought to be depicted with clarity, where we find him radiate, standing to front, with his head to left, wearing necklace, with a long trident in the right hand; behind is a bull to right on which the deity appears to be leaning.[1] Here the trident, the indispensable insignia of Śiva and Nandī, his bull mount, and trident or battle-axe trident combined as his weapon par-excellence is probably as old as his cult. On coin No. 33[2], Śiva makes his appearance with flames issuing from his head, but not otherwise radiate, and gourd and tiger skin are found in his left hand. But the bull is significantly absent from the coin. On the copper coin of Wema Kadphises, the deity seems to be polycephalous. Cunningham has, however, described the figure simply as Śiva. The two handed Śiva has got several attributes in his hands. On yet another coin preserved in the Museum of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Śiva is shown two armed and has a spear in his right hand as the attribute.[3] The association of spear as the attribute of Śiva in yet another coin may be intended to emphasise the terrific aspect of Lord Śiva.[4] It may mean that the god is ready to kill the devil and evil forces. Śiva is further portrayed on a coin of Wema Kadphises found from the excavation of Vaiśālī, where the god stands by the side of the bull.[5] The portrayal of Śiva on the coins of the Sakas and the Kushanas was not the only way of representing the god, while the anthropomorphic representation of the god was also not unknown. It becomes evident from a coin of Azes, on which occurs a bull to the right.[6] It is very easy to find how much sacred the bull with a high hump was to Lord Śiva. The coins of Wema Kadphises offer little

1. Whitehead, R, B, *PMC*, I, p. 183, pl. XVII.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 183, pl. XVII. 33.
3. Smith, V. A., *IMC*, I. p. 81. 43. AE.
4. *Ibid.*, 40 AE.
5. Sinha, B. P. and Roy, S. R., *Vaishali Excavations*, pl. xxxviii, Reg. No. 424/G. No. 53.
6. Whitehead, R. B., *PMC*, I, p, 125, pl. xii. 263.

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variety. The reverse side of the coins, without a single exception, is confined to the representation of the lord Śiva, who has been shown standing, holding a trident in his right hand, with the tiger's skin on his left arm and a water vessel in the right hand and accompanied by his bull Nandī.[1]

The gold staters of Vāsudeva, the Kushan king. depict on their reverse two armed Śiva with curly hair, and the speciality of the god is the presence of a noose or pāśa.[2] On Vāsudeva's coins is found not only three headed and four armed Śiva[3] but also three headed and two armed Śiva.[4] The four armed Śiva has also been depicted on a coin of Huviṣka.[5] Śiva appearing on Kaniska's coins also holds a noose in his hand.[6] On a coin of Vāsudeva, where the god holds a noose (*pāśa*), the bull appears to his left. So there is no doubt as to the perfect indentification of Śiva. As to the noose (*pāśa*) being held by Śiva in one of his hands, Cunningham describes him as identical with Yama, *pāśī* or *pāśapāṇi*, the god of death. But J. N. Banerjea has pointed out that the association of Śiva with noose is old. In the latter developed theological doctrines of the Śiva system, noose (*pāśa*) is very intimately connected with the god, The deity is obviously Śiva, because the trident is also there. A term of frequent occurrence found on both the gold and copper coins is OHPO, the origin and meaning of which are undetermi ned.[7] Prinsep considered it possible that it migat have been intended for Sanskrit 'Arka', a name of the Sun. Lassen suggests that Ugra (i.e. the fierce) is a name of Śiva, and the word is usually met with in conjunction with a figure of Śiva

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1. Cunnigham, A., *CAI*, p. 8.
2. *JNSI*, xiii, pt. I, p. 179.
3. *JASB*, xxx, p. 108.
4. Gardner, P., *The Coins of British Museum*, p. 159, pl. xxix. 10.
5. Cunningham, *CAI*, p. 67. pl. xxxiii. 6.
6. Sinha, B. P. and Roy, S. K., *op. cit.*, Regd. No. 37570G, No. 57.
7. Wilson, H. H. *Ariana Asiatiqua*, p. 361.

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holding a trident in his left hand and leaning on his bull Nandī,[1] On the coins of Kaneski, the word *'ugrs'* upon a gold and a copper coins is found in association with a figure having four arms, in one of which is not a noose but the regal fillet, one arm holds a trident and another a small Indian drum.[2] On some gold coins, we have some indistinct object in place of the two upper arms; but this is no doubt an error of the original die or of general ventures draughtsman.[3] The costume and the style of the figure on the copper coins certainly and on the gold coins possibly are feminine and in that case the person can scarcly be designated by a masculine noun. Although, therefore, the emblem is of a very Indian aspect, it is doubtful if Śiva has been intended. Ugra also, although it is an appellation of Śiva, is not of frequent use and the objection raised by Max Muller against the derivation of *OHPO* applies equally to its originating from Ugra, as it is to the Magian Persian and not to the Indian Sanskrit that we should naturally look for the appellation of the Magian divinities. Anyway, a close look at the figures on the coins, their dress, their postures, and their attributes, including noose, trident, bull and crescent over the head of the deity hardly leaves any doubt regarding the fact that the deity represented was Śiva. The crescent over the head of the deity with the bull behind[4] occurring on the reverse of a gold coin makes the identification of Śiva with *OHPO* clear beyond all shades of doubt. This word can more possibly be read as *OMPO* standing for 'Umeśa', which is one of the names of Śiva. On some coins,[5] Śiva appears in the pose of a Yogī with the upper half of the body naked, the lower portion being covered with an Indian *dhotī*.

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1. *Ibid*,, p. 361; Banerjea, J.N., DHI. p. 448. On the basis of the *Atharvaveda*, Banerjea rightly asserts that *'Ugra'* is one of the epithets of Śiva and it characterises his *ghora* or terrific aspect
2. *Ibid.*, p. 361.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 361.
4. Wilson, H. H., *Ariana Asiatiqua*, p, 378, pl. xiv, figs. 12, 13.
5. *Ibid*, p. 378, pl. xiv, figs, 14. 18.

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In the post-Gupta period, King Śaśāṅka of Gauda is described in one of his copper-plates, dated G. S, 300, as a great devotee of Śiva, 'the blessed god of the three worlds'.[1] This is further proved by a gold coins issued by him,[2] which represents on the obverse side the figure of Śiva, nimbate, radiating to the left on a couchant bull also to the left, with his right hand resting on the bull's hump and the left hand somewhat uplifted holding an uncertain object. To the left of the head of the deity, there is an orb of the moon (indicating *śaśāṅka*, 'moon'); the legend below in exergus is, '*Jayaḥ*' (victory); and in the right margin-Śrī Śa(śāṅka), vertically written. Śaśāṅka is said to have built a Śaiva temple in the shrine of Tribhuvaneśvara or Lingarāja; but it is not possible to identify the exact building at present.[3]

Symbolic and theriomorphic representations of Śiva are found on a number of seals as well as obtained from places like Basarh, Baiskaran (in the Bhagalpur district), Nalanda and Gaya. One of the seals discovered at Vaiśālī bears on it a Śiva-liṅga upon a Yonipaṭṭa along with a battle-axe-trident (*triśūla paraśu*)[4]. It also bears the legend '*Amratakeśvara*', the lord of Amrataka. Bloch[5] has inferred from this legend that the letter to which the seal was attached must have been despatched by the custodians of the temple of Amratakeśvara to some one at Basarh. It may be noted that Amratakeśvara has been mentioned in the *Matsya Purāṇa* as one of the eight *guhya-liṅgas* situated in Avimukta at Vārāṇasi.[6] Bloch had at one time regarded this as

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1. *EI*, Vol. VI. p. 143.
2. Smith, V. A., *IMC*, pl, xvi. 12; Allan, J. BMCCGD. pl. xxiii, 14-16; Altekar, A. S., *The Coinage of the Gupta Empire*, pp. 328-30.
3. Panigrahi, K. C., *Archaeological Remains at Bhuvanesvara*, pp. 29-32.
4. Thaplayal, K. K., *Studies in Ancient Indian Seals*, p. 147. pl. xiv. 2; Banerjea, J. N. *DHI*, p. 179; *ASIAR*, 1903-04, pp. 74, 104, 110, no. 30, pl. xL. 2.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Matsya Purāṇa*, 181. 28-29, 22, 51.

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the oldest representation of the phallic emblem that has as yet been found in India.[1] But as a result of the archaeological excavations at the Harappan sites, the antiquity of the phallic emblem has now been pushed back at least to the 3rd millennium B. C. The Amratakeśvara shrine was so famous that the Ahom kings of Assam built a temple of Siva by that name in the village of Ramsa in the district of Kāmarūpa.[2] It finds mention in an inscription of the 18th century from the same district,[3]

The trident symbol occurs also on other Basarh seals (nos. 369, 422 and 574) which were discovered by D. B. Spooner.

Another interesting sealing from the same site, which bears the legend '*Aramikiśvarasya*' in the Gupta characters, has five emblems placed on separate pedestals [4] Those on the extreme two are flower vases (*maṅgalaghaṭas*). The second and the fourth from the left are a spear and a *triśūla-paraśu* respectively. The symbol in the centre, as suggested by Banerjea,[5] may represent a schematic *liṅga*, the object of worship. The sealing thus depicts the main elements of a Śaiva shrine except the temple itself. The seal no. 226 of Spooner's List bears the legend 'Rājadharmeśvara(sya), as read by him.[6] This was probably a sealing of a Śaiva shrine, Rājadharmeśvara,

A seal matrix from Basarh bears the legend '*Bañjulaka*' in the early Cupta characters and has three symbols upon it.[7] The central symbol is undoubtedly a trident (*triśūla*), while the one on the right

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1. *ASIAR*, 1903-04. p. 106.
2. *Ibid.*. p, 104, fn. Banerjea. R. D., *Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 116.
3. Vide, *Ibid*, p. 116.
4. *ASIAR*, 1913-14, p. 142. no. 369, pl. xLviii; no. 396 in the same list in a duplicate. Thaplayal, K. K., *op. cit.*, p. 148, pl, xvi. 7.
5. Banerjea, J, N,, *DHI*, pp. 180-81; Spooner has described it as the outline of a stouter tree with spreading base'. (*ASIAR*, 1913-14, p. 142).
6. ASIAR, 1913-14. p. 135, no. 226.
7. *Ibid.* pp. 118, 176, no. 574, pl, xLi. 574. According to Spooner, the legend may be read as Vañjulaka (*ASIAR*, 1913-14, p, 178.)

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has been identified by Banerjea as 'a longish water vessel' and the one on the left is 'a short staff'.[1] Both the objects appear in the hands of Śiva on the Kushan coins. Accordihg to Banerjea's identification, all the three symbols are characteristically Śaiva symbols. 'Bañjula' occurs as the name of a river in the *Brahmāṇda Purāṇa.*[2] Seal no. 3 in Bloch's list (of which six specimens are known) simply bears a legend in the Gupta characters, which has been read by Bloch as '*Nama(ḥ) Pāśupate(ḥ)*, 'salutations to Paśupati (Śiva)[3]. Epigraphic evidences attest to the religious activities of the Pāśupatās in the Gupta period.[4]

Equally interesting are some of the seals and sealings from Nalanda. A '*grāma-jānapada*' sealing from Nalanda represents a *Liṅga* on a pedestal with a *triśūla* to the right and a bull to the left.[5] The sealing thus represents Śiva's weapon, his aniconic form and his *vāhana.*

A large number of clay sealings from Nalanda bear representations of Śiva-liṅgas between two beautifully depicted trees and the legend '*Pādapaggrāmasya*' in the Gupta characters.[6] Reference may also be made to a sealidg in Shri Dhir Singh Nahar's collection at Calcutta, as noticed by Banerjea[7]. It bears a similar device of the *Linga* and a tree with the legend *Pādapeśvara*'

There is a highly interesting seal of a District Officer at Nalanda, having the device of a crescent topped *Liṅga,* flanked by two female

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1. Banerjea, J. N., *DHI, p.* 179.
2. *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa,* II. 16.31-32 (from *Rksa*), II 16.34 (from the foot of the Vindhyas), II. 11.37 (from Mahendra).
3. *ASIAR,* 1903-04, p. 111. The legend is corrupt; its correct form should have been '*Pāśupataya*'.
4. EI- Vol. xxi. pp. 5-8.
5. *MASI* No. 66. p. 47, pl. VB. Sealing no. 5. 9. 56. Sastri has described the Liṅga as a Stūpa (*Ibid*), There appears to be a solar symbol above the Liṅga. The bull has been taken by Śāstrī simply as a 'horned animal' (*Ibid*).
6. Cf also *MASI* no. 66. p. 41, pl. III. 6.
7. Benerjea, *DHI*, pp, 114, 179.

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attendants, one on each side.[1] The device may be taken as representing Śiva Śaśāṅkaśekhara in his aniconic form. In this context, mention may also be made of a sealing from Basārh, showing a bull facing to the right and the crescent above it.[2] This was taken by Baṇerjea as Śiva in the theriomorphic form with a crescent on the head (*śaśāṅkaśekhara*).[3]

Of the two impressions on a clay lump from Nalanda,[4] one, belonging to a village, shows a two armed figure seated on a flat stool with a tree on the right and a *triśūta* on the left. Snakes are shown around his head and possibly also around the *triśūla*. The figure may be taken as representing Śiva in the anthropomorphic form.[5]

The village sealing no. S. Ia, 442 from the same site as the preceding one[6] has a four-armed deity, with a canopy of snake-hoods holding a trident and other objects in the hands. The legend on it reads: 'Kālapināka grāmasya' in the late Gupta characters. The name of the village suggests Śaiva association,[7]

It is interesting to note that on a Purikāgrāmajānapada sealing from Nalanda, there is the figure of a two armed deity carrying a rosary and a water vessel in his hands and adorned with nine snake-hoods around his head.[8] The rosary and the water-vessel are typical

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1. *MASI*, no. 66; p. 51, no. S. 1. 790 pl. V. j.
2. *ASIAR*, 1913-14, pp. 121, 150, no. 672. pl. L, 672.
3. Banerjea. *DHI*, p. 180. It is interesting to note that the crescent is shown below (and not above) the neck of the bull on seal no. 26 of Marshall's List of Bhiṭā Seals (*ASIAR*, 1911-12, p. 51),
4. *MASI*, no. 66 p. 41; nos. S. I. 645 and 811, pl. III. h. The other impression belongs to the Buddhist Samgha.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 41. Sastri leaves the figure unidentified, cf also Banerjea, *DHI*, p. 187.
6. *MASI*, no. 66, p. 43, pl. VI. g, Banerjea, J. N., *DHI*, p. 187, pl. X. 2.
7. As Banerjea writes, 'Śiva is Kāla or Mahākāla, the Time Eternal, on one hand and Pināki (wielder of the Pināka bow) on the other. (*DHI*, p. 187).
8. *MASI* no. 66, p. 45, no. S. I, 374, pl. V. g, Banerjea. J. N., *DHI*, p. 187. The palaeography suggests a slightly later date (C. 8th century A. D.)

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attributes of Śiva. No doubt, the iconographic texts do not prescribe snake-hoods over the head of Śiva,[1] but the snake is associated with that deity. The Śaiva cult in and around Nalanda appears to have borrowed a good deal from the Nāga cult which was popular in that region, and this explains the presence of the snake-hoods over the head of the figures portrayed. The seal no. S, I. 831[2] shows a four-armed deity, perhaps Śiva holding a rosary in the upper right hand[3] and a *triśūta* in the upper left. The attributes in the lower hands are not clear. The figure appears to be seated on a bull. The legend read by Sastri as '*Se(vattha)-like-grāmasya* on another Nalanda seal[4] is perhaps meant for *Śivasthalika-grāmasya*' and the four-armed deity thereon represents Śiva. The figure holds a *triśūla* in the upper left hand. The attributes of other hands are not clear.

One of the earliest representations of the Ardhanārīśvara aspect of Śiva in art and certainly the earliest known so far in Bihar is found depicted on a seal discovered from the excavations at Basarh[5] in the district of Vaiśālī which Spooner failed to identify correctly.[6] The seal, which has been discussed in greater detail by J. N. Banerjea[7], shows a figure seemingly nude, having male and female features in the two halves, standing to front with the upper part of the body bent

1. This feature is prescribed for the images of Balarāma, Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras Supārśvanātha and Pārśvanātha and Nāga figures,
2. *MASI* no. 66, p, 42, pl, III. k.
3. Shastri describes it as *chakra* (*Ibid*), p, 42.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 42, no. S. I., 787. pl. III. j.
5. *ASIAR.* 1913-14, p. 152. pl. L (Seal no 764).
6. *Ibid.*, D. B. Spooner has described the figure in the following words, "a tall female figure standing facing, with the upper part of body bent considerably to the proper left, left hand on hip, right extended towards the right as in the *varada -mudrā*. The figure is seemingly nude, but there are draperies to left and right from the level of the waist, some garland on drapery pendent in front, as though suspended from a girdle around the waist, the most curious feature of all is the head-dress which she wears, like a single-horn with streamer floating to the proper left."
7. Banerjea, J. N. *DHI* pp. 181-82.

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considerably to the proper left within an oval area. The two-armed figure has his left hand resting on the hip, while the right hand is displayed in the *varada-mudrā*. Ardhanārīśvara is characterised by a longish coil of *jatā* placed on the right side of the head, a prominent breast on the left side, (he right breast being much smaller than the left one) and a male membre-genre raised up in accordance with the text.[1] The seal is inscribed, bearing the legend : *'Tripurākṣa-ṣaṣṭhīdattaḥ'*[2]

1. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 260. 7.
2. *IHQ*, Vol. XXXI, 1955. p. 338.

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CHAPTER III
ŚIVA IN INSCRIPTIONS

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Inscriptions as well, which are amongst the main sources for the reconstruction of the history of ancient India, throw very welcome light on the prevalence of Śaivism in Bihar. The study of the inscriptions shows that there were actually some temples existing in Bihar which were dedicated to the worship of Lord Śiva.

It may, however, be noted that the earliest inscriptions which contain references to Śaivism in Bihar are the inscriptions of the Gupta period. The Gupta monarchs were mostly the followers of the Vaiṣṇava faith and took pride in styling themselves as '*paramabhāgavatas*'; but their records show that they evinced great toleration to other sects like Śaivism, Buddhism and Jainism.[1] The reign of Kumāragupta I reveals some evidence of this toleration shown towards Śaivism. Kumāragupta I is well known not only to have borne himself the name Kumāra of the son of Śiva and generalissimo of the gods, but his son Skandagupta was also named after the god (as Skanda). In the Bilsad stons pillar inscription of Kumāragupta I, dated 415-16 A.D., one Dhruvaśarman is related to have built in a temple of the 'the divine god Svāmī Mahāsena, whose wondrous form is covered over with the accumulation of the lusture of the three worlds ...who is the god Brahmaṇya, a *pratoli* or gateway with a flight of

1. Goswami, K. G. in *IHQ*. Vol. XIII, no. 2, pp. 323-28, Tripathi, R. S., *Ibid*. Vol. XV, pp. 1-12; *PIHC*, 1938, pp. 63-70

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steps, a *sattra* or charitable alms-house and a column to record this donation.[1] Svāmī Mahāsena is another name of Kārttikeya, the son of Śiva. In the Karmadaṇḍā inscription (Faizabad district, U.P.) of this ruler, dated 436 A.D., obeisance is first made to Mahādeva (*Namo Mahādevāya*), while his minister Kumārāmātya Mahābalādhikṛta Pṛthvīsena is recorded to have given, for the sake of obeisance to the lord Mahādeva, known as Pṛthvīśvara, 'proper and righteous offerings,' at the feet of the lord Śaileśvarasvāmī Mahādeva, from Ayodhya, probably the *Liṅga* on which the inscription is inscribed.[2] This inscription further indicates how the Brāhmaṇas in Ayodhya of different *gotras* and *chāraṇas*, perfect in their respective observances and studies 'in the *mantras*, the *sūtras*, the *bhāṣyas* and *pravachanas*', participated in the procession of the image (*devadroṇi*) (of Śiva ?) at Bharadi.[3], His feudatory, Bandhuvarman, as the Maṇḍasore stone inscription (Madhya Pradesh), dated 437-38 A.D. suggests, although a worshipper of the sun, was apparently not hostile to the cult of Śiva, for this record refers to the season (*Śiśira*) when Kāmadeva's body was destroyed by Hara (i.e. Śiva).[4] No doubt Bilsad and Karmadaṇḍā are in Uttar Pradesh and Maṇḍasore in Madhya Pradesh, but both the states of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, are in immediate neighbourhood of the state of Bihar over which the rule of the Gupta monarchs, who ruled from Bihar, extended, and it is, therefore, not unlikely that Śaivism in Bihar as well recorded smooth progress under the benevolence of Kumāragupta I. And this is evident from the inscription of his son Skandagupta found in Bihar itself. The much mutilated Bihar stone pillar inscription (the first of which is undated) of the time of Skandagupta, which refers to the shrine of Bhadrārya, indicates that it belonged to the Śaiva form of worship in its Śākta or Tāntrik development as it refers to the erection of a sacrificial post (*yūpa*), evidently by some minister whose sister had been espoused by

1. Fleet, *CII*, Vol. III. No. 10, pp. 44-45.
2. *EI*, Vol. X, No. 15, p, 72.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Banerjea, J. N., *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 361.

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Kumāragupta I. This record also refers to some deities headed by the god Skanda (regarded as the son of Śiva) and the Divine Mothers,[1] These are the Saptamātṛkās or the seven Mothers, generally found together in a group, being the independent manifestations of Pārvatī.[2] The record being unfortunately damaged at the vital points not enough of it remains to give clear indication of its purport However, the association of the Divine Mothers with Skanda (Kārttikeya), the son of Śiva, proves the continuation of the earlier mythological tradition of the intimate connection of the Mother Goddesses with Skanda or Kārttikeya and also indicates the prevalence of the Śaiva form of worship in this part of Bihar. It is interesting to note that the *Brahmāḍṇa Purāṇa* refers to the bringing up of the son of Śiva by the Kṛttikās [3] According to J. N. Banerjea[4], Kārttikeya is here apparently in the role of the guardian of the Mothers which position is often assigned to Gaṇapati and Vīrabhadra (an aspect of Śiva) in the mediaeveal reliefs representing the Saptamātṛkās'. In fact, as the Gaṅgādhara stone inscription of Viśvavarmana, a feudatory of Kumāragupta I, dated in the Gupta year 104 (i e. 423-24 A.D.) would show, his minister Mayurākṣaka built not only a shrine of Lord Viṣṇu but also a temple of these Divine Mothers.[5] This indicates how as early as 423-24 A.D., the Saptamātṛkās became special objects of worship as well as the tutelary deities of the Guptas.

Cunningham found at Baiskarn ridge, near Sultanganj, in the district of Bhagalpur a pair of foot-prints below which was written '*Rudra-Mahāla*',[6] i.e. *Rudra-Mahālaya* or Śiva. 'the supreme Lord' in boldly cut Gupta letters. The importance of this short inscription

1 Fleet, CII. Vol. III. No. 12, p. 49, l. 9 ;
"*Skanda-pradhānair-bhuvī mātṛbhiś-cha lokān-sa su (?) sya (?)*"

2. Saletore, R. N., *Life in the Gupta Age*, p. 502.

3. Sinha K., *Kārttikeya in Indian Art and Literature*, p. 93.

4. Bnnerjea, J. N. *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 364.

5. Fleet, *CI I*, Vol. III, no. 17, p, 76. 11. 35-36.

6. *ASR*, Vol. XV. p. 24, Patil. D. R.. *Antiquarian Remains in Bihar*, pp. 10-81.

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lies in the fact that possibly like the Vaiṣṇavas, the Śaivas of the Bhagalpur region also aspired for the abode of Lord Śiva.[1]

The Later Gupta monarchas, who ruled in the 6th and 7th centuries A.D., seem to have leanings towards Śaivism. Two of the Later Gupta monarchs, Kumāragupta and Mahāsenagupta, have been named after the Lord of War, the son of Śiva. The deity has been referred to as the son of Śiva with peacock as his *vāhana* in the Aphsad stone inscription (Nawada district) of Ādityasena.[2] In this inscription, Kumāragupta, the son of Jivitagupta, has been compared with 'the-son (*tanaya*) of Hara (Śiva) who rides upon a peacock'.[3] That it was not a vain vaunt is proved from the fact that Kumāragupta 'churned that formidable milk-ocean, the cause of the attainment of fortune, which was the army of the glorious Īśāṇavarman[4] the great Maukharī King mentioned in the Haraha inscription of 554 A.D.[5] In the Mallar plates of Mahāśivagupta also, Kārttikeya is mentioned as the son of Śiva.[6]

Some time back, a stone inscription of the Later Gupta monarch Viṣṇugupta was found at the village. Maṅgarāon, situated at a distance of about 23 kms. south-west of Buxar in the district of Bhojpur.[7] The inscription records a permanent gift of a *pala* of oil for burning a lamp before the image of Lord Subhadreśvara (i.e. Lord Śiva) in the temple of Mittra-Keśava by one Avimuktajña, a resident of the village Aṅgāra, in the Kuṭṭuka country. According to P. Banerje[8], the village Aṅgāra of the inscription is an ancient name of the modern Maṅgarāon and, if this is really the case, the place should be expected to

1. For several interpretations of the words 'parama-pada' of Viṣṇu or Viṣṇupada, See Sircar, D. C. in *CHI*, Vol. IV. pp. 109-10.
2. *Ibid*,, no. 42, p. 203.
3. *Ibid.*, 11.5 and 6 ;
   "*Hara īva Śīkhivāhanam tanayam*".
4. *Ibid.*.
5. *EI*, Vol. XIV no. 5.
6. *EI*. Vol. XXIII. p. 122.
7. *EI*. Vol XXVI, p. 241 ff, *JBORS*, Vol. XXX, pp. 199-202.
8. *Ibid.*

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contain some ancient ruins of the Śaiva temple. The inscription is dated in the seventeenth regnal year of the Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara Viṣṇugupta. The inscription would be no other than that of the Later Gupta line, who succeeded Devagupta and preceded Jīvitagupta II and may be assigned to about the 7th century A.D.

In this connection, mention may be made of yet another inscription, though not of the Later Gupta ruler, but of approximately the same period as the Maṅgarāon inscription. The inscription, which appears on the lower edge of a coping stone of the sandstone railing at Bodhgaya, records the dedication of a sum of money for defraying the cost of keeping up a lamp fed with clarified butter burning in the chamber of possibly the Great Temple so long the moon and the stars did last.[1] It also mentions the temple having been adorned with a new coating of plaster and paint at the cost of two hundred and fifty dinaras. The inscription is not dated; but the style of the writing allows us to put down the date at about the 6th or 7th century A.D.[2] Thus, both the Maṅgarāon and the Bodhgaya inscriptions are quite similar in content, showing almost identical religious practices being followed in respect of the Śaiva as well as the Buddhist temples.

A votive inscription, incised on a slab of stone, was found in two fragments from the Muṇḍeśvarī temple in the district of Rohtas, one section of which was discovered by P C. Mukherji as early as 1891[3] and the other by Bloch in 1903-4[4] in course of the clearance of the debris of the ruins Both the fragments are presently preserved in the Indian Museum at Calcutta. The inscription was edited first in 1907 by R.D Banerji[5] and re-edited by N. G. Majumdar in 1920.[6] The

1. Cunningham, A., *Mahābodhi*, p. 23. Barua, B. M., *Gaya and Buddha-Gaya*, Vol. II, p. 71. Mitra. R. L., *Buddha-Gaya*, p. 192.
2. Barua, B. M., *op. cit.*, p. 71.
3. Banerji, R. D., *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 156.
4. *Annual Report, ASI*, BC, 1903-04, pp, 9-10.
5. *EI*, Vol. IX, pp. 282-83.
6. *IA*, Vol. XLIV, pp. 21 ff.

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inscription refers to the reign of a king named Udayasena and to the date 30 of an unspecified era, and records a donation of a noble named Bhāgudalana[1] in the reign of the king who held the titles of *mahāsāmanta, mahāpratihāra* and *mahārāja*, and who was evidently a subordinate chief under Harṣa.[2] This inscription mentions the erection of a temple (*maṭha*) of Nārāyaṇa close to the temple of Viniteśvara (Lord Śiva), thus suggesting the existence of an additional Vaiṣṇava temple on the hill, but of the existence of such a Vaiṣṇava temple on the hill there seems to be no indication at present, for the carvings and the sculptures amongst the existing ruins are primarily, if not exclusively, Śaivite in character. The inscription, on the basis of its palaeography, is believed to belong to the 7th century A.D.[3]

There are inscriptions of the time of the Maukharī chief Anantavarman engraved over the entrances of the rock-cut caves of the Nagarjuni hill in the district of Gaya. One of the Nagarjuni hill cave inscriptions records that the Maukharī chief Anantavarman caused the installation of the images of Śiva, in the form of Bhūtapati (the Lord of Beings) and his wife Pārvatī under the name Devī, in the cave.[4] Fleet took the image to be that of Śiva-Ardhanārīśvara.[5] D.C. Sircar is, however, of opinion that either there were images of Bhūtapati (Śiva) and Devī (Durgā) or probably a joint image styled Ardhanārīśvara.[6] Another inscription of the same chieftain at Nagarjuni further records the installation of the image of the goddess Pārvatī, the wife of Śiva, under the name of Kātyāyanī[7] and also

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1. The donor of the record is taken to be Bhāgudalana by R. D. Banerji (*EI*, Vol. IX, pp. 282 ff); while N. G. Majumdar takes him as Gomibhaṭṭa (*IA*, Vol. XLIV, pp. 21ff.).
2. Banerji, R. D., *op. cit.*, p. 156.
3. *JBRS*, Vol. XLIV, 1958, pp. 14ff.
4. Fleet, *CII*, Vol. III, pp. 223-26, No. 49 1.4 (Text):
   Vimvam Bhutapater-guh-asritam-idam Devyas-cha payaj-jagat.
5. *Ibid*,. p. 224.
6. *Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. IV, p. 141.
7. Fleet, CII. Vol. III. p. 226, No. 50, 1.8. (Text) :—
   Vindhya-bhūdhara-guham-āśritya Kātyāyanī.

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the grant to the same goddess, under the name of Bhavānī, of a village, the name of which is unfortunately destroyed.[1] The inscription also hints at the demon king Mahiṣāsura having been defeated by the goddess (Devī), who has been conceived in the inscription in her fiercer form.[2]

A small stone inscription from Vaṭesvarasthāna, a place near Patharghatta, about 13 kms. north-east of Kahalgaon (Colgong) in the district of Bhagalpur, is of considerable interest. It refers to the celebration of a ceremony styled as '*Varṣavardhana*' being performed by the people of the locality in honour of the god Vaddeśvara (Vaṭeśvara-Śiva).[3] '*Varṣavardhana*' as also '*Varṣovṛddhi*' seems to indicate some kind of annual festival or ceremony celebrating a birth day.[4] The celebration is said to have taken place in the fourth quarter of the *Punarvasu-nakṣatra* on the second day of the bright fort night of the month of Āṣāḍha. There is no reference to any era or the regnal reckoning of a king, but, on the basis of its palaeography, the inscription has been ascribed to the 8th-9th century A D.

Some of the Pāla inscriptions as well are of considerable importance for they too contain invaluable references with regard to various aspects connected with the worship of Śiva in Bihar. The Pāla rulers were mostly the followers of Buddism and took pride in styling themselves as '*paramasaugata*' but they too, like the Gupta monarchs, were tolerant to other religions. The Bodhgaya votive inscription of the time of the Pāla ruler Dharmapāla is of supreme importance to the students of religious history. The slab of stone containing the inscription was found at a place south of the great Mahābodhi temple

1. *Ibid.*, 1.10 (Text) :—
   .....*grāmam-analpa-bhoga-vibhavaṁ ramyaṁ Bhavānyai dadau.*
2. *Ibid.*, 1.1 (Text) :—
   S*-avajnam Mahiṣ-āsurasaya sirasi nyastaḥ kvanannupuraḥ.*
3. *JBRS*, Vol. XXXVII, pts III-IV, 1951, pp. 4-7.
4. Verma, B. S., *Socio-Religious, Economic and Literary Condition of Bihar*, p. 137.

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and it has been removed to the Indian Museum at Calcutta.[1] The inscription records the consecration of a temple dedicated to the worship of the four faced Mahādeva (obviously Chaturmukhī-Liṅga of Śiva),[2] in a place named Champāśayatana by a man named Ujvala (Ujjala), and the excavation of a tank by him at a cost of three thousand *drammas*. The inscription is dated in the 26th regnal year of the Pāla ruler Dharmapāla i e. C. 776 A.D. The dedication of a Śaiva temple at Mahābodhi, regarded as the greatest place of Buddist importance, is worthy of note. It suggests undoubtedly the policy of religious toleration pursued by Dharmapāla, otherwise no Brahmanical (Śaiva) temple would have been allowed to be constructed so near the Mahābodhi temple at Bodhgaya.[3] It further suggests the great popularity of the religion of Śiva during the time of the Pāla rular Dharmapāla.

An interesting aspect of religious life is exhibited by the Bhagalpur copper-plate grant of Nārāyaṇapāla (c. 861-917 A.D.) of the Pāla dynasty, issued when the king was staying at Mudgagiri (modern Monghyr).[4] It is well known that the Pālas were the Buddhists and the initial stanza of the record, declaring the victory of the Daśabala (Buddha) and of Gopāla (founder of the Pāla dynasty), shows that the verse was composed when Nārāyaṇapāla, the donor of the grant was a follower of Buddhism. However, the internal evidence of the epigraph points to the fact that when the charter was issued in the seventeenth regnal year of Nārāyaṇapāla, the king had apparently

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1. *J & PASB*, NS, Vol. IV, pp. 101-03; Maitreya, A. K. *Gauḍalekhamālā*, p. 31, Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions*, pp, 110-114; Banerji, R. D., *Pālas of Bengal*, p. 13.
2. *Mbh. Anuśāsanaparvan*, 17/76; *Chaturmukh mahāliṅga Chāru-liṅgasthaivacha.*
3. Mukherji and Maity, *op. cit*, p. 110.
4. Maitreya, A. K., *op. cit.*, pp. 55 ff; Mukherji and Maity. *op. cit*, pp. 163-84, *JASB*, Vol. XV, p, 304, *IA*, Vol. XV, pp. 305 ff. *JASB*, Vol. XLVII, pt. I, pp. 404 ff.

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repudiated the religious faith of his forefathers. It has to be noted that while the Pāla charters represent the donors as *Paramasaugata* (i.e. a devotee of the Sugata or Buddha) and as making the grants in the name of Lord Buddha (*Buddha-bhaṭṭāraka-uddisya*), whoever may have been the donee, the Bhagalpur plate not only mentions the donor without the epithat '*Paramasaugata*' but states that the grant was made in the name of Lord Śiva (*Śiva-bhaṭṭārakaṁ-uddisya*).

There is another thing to be considered. The Bhagalpur grant issued from the king's *jayaskandhāvāra* at Mudgagiri (modern Monghyr) is of considerable significance for it supplies us with the information that the villages of Mauktika (Mauktikagrāma) situated in the Kākṣa-viṣaya (district) of the Tīrabhūkti (province) was given in grant mainly in favour of a Śaiva religious establishment at a place called Kalaśapota apparently in the same neighbourhood. In this context it may also be noted that the *dūtaka* of the grant had been Bhaṭṭa-Puṇyakīrttī, otherwise named as Gauravamiśra, the minister of the king, who had erected the Garuḍa-*stambha* at Bādal.[1] What is, however, of special importance is that the Śaiva establishment was an exceptionally huge one built by the king Nārāyaṇapāla himsalf. We are told that the establishment was a *sahasrāyatana*, meaning that it had one thousand cells or rooms, while it is further stated that the village was granted in favour not only for the upkeep of the establishment, but also for the worship of Lord Śiva installed therein and for the maintenance of the preceptors devoted to the Lord, the Pāśupata-Āchārya-Pariṣad (i.e. Śaiva priests of the Pāśupata community), no doubt engaged for the worship of Śiva-bhaṭṭāraka. The village donated under this proclaimation has been made rent free. The construction of the huge śaiva establishment and the installation of apparently a Śiva-Liṅga therein by the king himself point to the śaiva leanings of Nārāyaṇapāla who probably gave up Buddism and became a śaiva in later life. It may further be stated that there may have been certain temples for the maintenance of which the rulers showed

1. *Ibid.*

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their keen interest and even donated villages, the earnings from which were diverted for being spent over the maintenance of the temples and the families of the priests. The inscription is dated on the 9th day of the month of Vaiśākha in the 17th regnal year of the Pāla ruler Nārāyaṇapāla.

There is another inscription, discovered as early as 1798, which offers similar evidence as the Bhagalpur plate on the religious leanings of a Pāla king[2]. It is the Sarnath stone inscription (Vārāṇasi district, Uttar Pradesh) dated 1026 A. D. and belonging to the time of the Pāla ruler Mahipāla I (C. 997-1027 A. D.), the great-grandson of Nārāyaṇapāla. It records some religious activities of the king Mahipāla who had śaiva leanings and of Sthirapāla and Vasantapāla, both of whom were Buddhists and appear to have been the king's younger brothers or cousins. Mahipāla, the king of Gauḍa, is stated here to have worshipped the feet of *'Guraga'* (śaiva priest in Kannada) named Vāmārāṣi at Vārāṇasi and made at Kāśī apparently for the said śaiva priest, a śiva-liṅga under the Īśāṇa, a beautifully decorated bell and numerous other objects, while Sthirapāla and Vasantapāla carried repairs to the Dharmarājikā, Dharmachakra and Gandhakuṭī.

In this context we may also take note of the Bāngarh inscription of the śaiva ascetic Mūrtiśiva from the West Dinajpur district of West Bengal.[3] The Bāngarh inscription shows that there was a great śaiva monastery or temple complex at Bāngarh in the 10th century A.D. We are told that there was an ascetic named Vidyāśiva attaehed to the Golagimaṭha belonging to the śaiva ascetics of the Durvāsas

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1. Mukherji and Maity, *op. cit.*, p. 168, 11 38 ff:—
   Kalaśapote. Mahārājādhirāja-Śri-Nārāyaṇapāladevena svayaṁ-kārit-sahasrāyatanasya. Tatrapratisthāpitasya bhagavataḥ Śiva-bhaṭṭārakasya Pāśupata-Ācharayya-Pariṣadaśha. Yatharham pūjā-bali-chāru-satranavā-karmmar dhyārthataṁ.
2. Maitreya, A. K., *op. cit.*, pp. 104 ff.
3. Sircar, D. C., *Śilālekha-Tāmraśāsanādir-Prasaṅga*, pp. 85 ff.

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community early in the said century. Vidyāśiva's disciple was Dharmaśiva. The Pāla ruler Mahipāla I built a huge *maṭha* apparently at Bāngarh and dedicated it in favour of Indraśiva, who was a disciple of Dharmaśiva and may have been brought by the Pāla king from Vārāṇasi. This fact together with king's devotion to the Pāśupata priest Vāmārāṣi of Vārāṇasi, as we learn from the Sarnath inscription, would clearly point to the Śaiva leanings of the Pāla ruler Mahipāla I exactly as in the case of his great grandfather Nārāyaṇapāla.

The Bāngarh inscription further tells us how Nayapāla (c. 1027-43 A. D.), the son and successor of Mahipāla I, was a disciple (*śiṣya*) of the Śaiva ascetic Sarvaśiva, who was Indraśiva's disciple. When in his old age Sarvaśiva went to *vā aprastha*, his youngest brother and disciple Mūrtiśiva was placed in charge of the preceptorship of the king of Gauḍa. It will thus be seen how the Sarnath inscription from Uttar Prdesh and the Bāngarh inscription from West Bengal come to our help in understanding the religious leaning of the Pāla ruler Nārāyaṇpāla as indicated by the Bhagalpur plate discovered more than a century ago.

There are some highly interesting inscriptions at Gaya of the time of the Pāla rulers Nayapāla and Vigrahapāla III which suggest that the worship of Śiva had been very popular during their reign periods, and even some of the Śiva temples had been constructed in the time of Vigrahapāla III. One such inscription has been found on the gate of the modern Kṛṣṇa-Dvārikā temple at Gaya.[1] The inscription bears testimony to the fact that Śiva as Lord Almighty was worshipped by a section of the people in the Gaya region. Śiva has been conceived there as 'unborn' (*ajāta*) having the moon as his crest jewel (*dvijarājaś kharaḥ*), smeared with ashes (*samantato bhuvi vibhūti-bhuṣaṇaḥ*), and husband of Pārvatī, the daughter of the mountain king, the Himālaya (*Girijā-putrikā-priyā*). The inscription is dated

1. *JASB*, 1900, pp. 190-95; Maitreya, A. K., *Gauḍalekhamālā*, pp. 110 ff: Mukherji and Maity, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-52. vv. 4-5, *ASR*, III. pl. XXXII.

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in the fifteenth regnal year of the Pāla ruler Nayapāla, i. e. about 1042 A. D.

The Gaya Akṣayavaṭa inscription of the time of Vigrahapāla III is affixed to the wall of a small shrine under the *akṣayavaṭa* at Gaya. The central part of the inscription carved on a stela has suffered severely and is only partly legible, being broken into two parts, otherwise it is quite clear. The inscription records the erection of two temples of Śiva, one called Vaṭeśa at the Aksayavaṭa and the other called Prapitāmaheśvara closeby. These temples were constructed by one Viśvarūpa or Viśvāditya, who has been described as the son of Śūdraka and the grandson of Paritoṣa, belonging to the great family of the Brāhmaṇas, in the 5th year of the reign of the Pāla ruler Vigrahapāla III (c. 1055-70 A.D.) i.e. about 1060 A.D.[1] It is significant to note that Lord Śiva known as Prapitāmaheśvara is still worshipped at Gaya. In the inscription, reference is also made to the Śaiva residents of the Gaya town. The episode of the destruction of Kāma by Śiva was quite well known (*Anaṅgadarpa-dalanodagārī*), Śiva (Rudra) has been conceived in the inscription as one of the gods among the Trinity, the other two gods being Brahmā and Viṣṇu, Śiva is invoked there in the Liṅga form called Vaṭeśa.

The Monghyr stone inscription of the time of Bhāgiratha, which was found inscribed on a slab of stone built up into the wall of the gateway near the Kaṣṭahārinighāṭ of Monghyr, refers to one king Bhāgiratha and the construction of a temple, presumably at the *ghāṭ* itself, dedicated to the worship of the god Śambhu (Śiva) by one Gopālitakrama of the Mukteśvara family.[2] not known from any other source. The inscription bears a date '13', but the reading seems doubtful. Bloch assigned the inscription to the 10th century A.D. but Waddell had earlier taken it to belong to the 12th century A.D.

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1. *EI*, Vol, XXXVI, pp. 89-92, Banerji, R. D., *Pālas of Bengal*, pp. 40-42.
2. Proc. *ASB*, 1890, p. 192, *Annual Report, ASI*, BC, 1903. p. 9, Bhandarkar's List No. 176.

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Śaivism must have flourished in Bihar during the reign periods of the Sena rulers. Right from the time of Vijayasena to the time of Lakṣmanasena, whose activities have been noticed in Bihar, the Sena rulers assumed titles indicative of their being devout Śaivas. Vijayasena and Vallālasena assumed titles like 'Arirāja-Vṛsabbha-Śaṁkara'[1] and 'Arirāja-Nihaṣaṇika-śaṁkarah'[2]. Their records begin with the *mantra*: '*Om Namaḥ śivāya*'. The title Nihaṣamka of Vallālasena is supported by the Pargana Nihasamkapura-Kurha in the Madhepura sub-division of the Saharsa district, which is supposed to have been named after him, when he conquered the region. Lakṣmaṇasena, whose war operations, also like his father and grandfather, were conducted in North and South Bihar, is styled as Maḍana-Śaṁkara in the Edilpur[3] and Madanapāḍā[4] inscriptions. Lakṣmaṇasena, however, styles himself as Parama Nārasiṁha in the Madhainagar copper plate grant[5] and Parama Vaiṣṇava in the Tarpaṇadighī copper plate grant.[6] The record begins with an invocation to the god Nārāyaṇa as well of '*Om Om Namo Nārayaṇāya*'. Soldiers of Lakṣmaṇasena, however, celebrated Śivarātri festival in their companies.[7] It may suggest that Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism both were assimilated within the fold of Hinduism and the followers of the creeds observed catholic attitude.

In this context we may mention that P. C, Bagchi[8] and R. C. Majumdar[9], who drew our attention to the Sena kings, described as devotees of the different gods, Śiva, Viṣṇu and Sūrya and believed

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1. *Inscriptions of Bengal*, Vol. III, p. 57, 'Barrackpore. Copper plate of Vijayasens, 11. 19-20 (text).
2. *Ibid*, pp. 118 ff. Edilpur plate of Kesanasena, 11. 38-39.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 118 ff. 1. 40.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 132 ff. 1. 35.
5. *Ibid*,. p. 111, 1. 33,
6. *Ibid.*. p. 101, 1, 29.
7. Nemkar, 135, of. *MAV*, p. 86, also Carpentier, J. E. *Theism in Mediaeval India*, p. 306.
8. Majumdar. R. C., *HBR*, I, p. 427.
9. Majumdar, R. C., *History of Ancient Bengal*, pp. 533-34.

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that kings represented with such different religious leanings typified the true spirit of the age since even today the same spirit characterise religious life in Eastern India where orthodox Hindus perform the worship of Nārāyaṇa, Lakṣmī, Śiva, Durgā, Kārttikeya, Sūrya and other gods and goddesses with equal zeal and veneration, although their families are labelled as Vaiṣṇava, Śākta, etc., but at the same time have faith in and reverence for all the gods.

The above suggestion, as pointed out by D. C. Sircar,[1] is based on a misunderstanding of the evidences at our disposal.[2] In the first place, the practice of different members of the same family being devotees of different deities is not confined to Eastern India. In the Puṣyabhūti family of Thāneśvara, Prābhākaravardhana is stated to have been devoted to the Sun-god, his son Rājyavardhana to the Saugata (Buddha) and his younger brother Harṣavardhana to Māheśvara (Śiva).[3] Likewise, among the Gurjara-Pratihāras of Jodhpur, who later even ruled for some time over parts of Bihar and Bengal, Devaśakti was a worshipper of Viṣnu. his son Vatsaraja of Maheśvara, his son Nāgabhaṭa II of Bhagavatī and his son Rāmabhadra of the Sun-god.[4]

Secondly, the representations of different members of the same family as devoted to different deities. often side by side, in the same record, must have been quite meaningful to the persons concerned, otherwise, such representations become quite meaningless. Thirdly, in case there was no real difference between the religious leanings of the father and the son when they are stated to have been devotees of two different deities, how do we explain the fact that a few kings are described as devotees even of two gods at the same time ? The Gaṅga king Anantavarman Choḍagaṅga (1078-1147 A.D,) had reason to be

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1. Sircar, D. C., Aspects of the cultural History of Ancient Bihar, p. 81
2. See Sircar, D. C., *K. P. Jayaswal Commemoration Volume. Patna, 1981,* pp. 424 ff.
3. Bhandarkar's List of Inscriptions, No. 25.
4. Sircar, D. C., *op. cit.*, p. 426.

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described in only one of his records as a devotes of both the gods Maheśvara and Viṣṇu,[1] A similar case is also offered by the Kāmarūpa ruler Vaidyadeva, who flourished in the second quarter of the twelfth century A,D.

The Pañchobh copper plate inscription of Saṁgrāmagupta found at the village Pañchobh. about 5 miles (8kms.) west of Laheriasarai in the district of Darbhanga introduces a hitherto unknown dynasty of rulers beginning from Yajñeśagupta and followed by Damodaragupta, Devagupta, Rājādityagupta, Kṛṣṇagupta and Saṁgramagupta,[2] In the inscription, Saṁgramagupta, who is a Mahāmāṇḍalika, assumes the grandiloquent titles of Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājadhiraja Parameśvara. He is also described as the most devout worshipper of Śiva (Maheśvara).[3] Rājāditya is also credited with all the imperial titles of Saṁgramagupta. That Saṁgramagupta was a follower of the Śaiva faith is also confirmed from the fact that in the upper part of the copper plate bearing the inscription has been engraved the figure of a bull or Nandi, the *Vāhana* of Śiva, facing towords the proper right in a slightly recumbent posture,[4]

1. *Ibid*,, pp. 426-27.
2. Sahai, B., *Inscriptions of Bihar*, pp. 140-41.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
4. *JBORS*. Vol. v, pp. 522 ff. and plate; Śinha, B. P., *Comprehensive History of Bihar*, Vol, II, p. 707.

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CHAPTER IV
ŚIVA TEMPLES

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Temples have had been playing significant role in the religious life of men and women since very early times.

Like other parts of the country, the state of Bihar as well had numerous temples existing within its limits, But unfortunately most of the temples have been comp.etaly obliterated.

It would, however, be worthwhile, taking into account some of the Śiva temples of the state, for they furnish very valuable information with regard to the study of Śaivism in the state of Bihar.

THE KOÑCHEŚVARA TEMPLE AT KOÑCH

Koñch is a large village situated about 30 Kms. to the north-west of Gaya on the Gaya-Daudnagar road. The village is only 6·5 Kms. west of Tekari. The village of Koñch contains remains of a number of temples but the principal one is an ancient temple built entirely of burnt bricks. The temple is undoubtedly a Brahmanical one, and it was dedicated to the worship of Lord Śiva known as Koñcheśvara. The presence of Śiva-liṅga inside the *garbhagṛha* apparently undisturbed and the prevalence of the Śaive sculptures are quite sufficient to establish this attribution.

The temple proper is a square building with the *garbhagṛha* measuring 8.38 metres a side externally and 3·43 metres internally.

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The height is about 24 diameters, or nearly 21.34 metres.[1] As already observed, the main object of worship inside the *garbhagṛha* is the Śiva-liṅga, partially filled in with earth and rubbish. The entrance doorway to the *garbhagṛha* faces towards the east, The temple has been constructed in two storeys.

The *garbhagṛha* of the temple was preceded by a pillared hall, which has now considerably crumbled down. The stone pillars that once supported the roof of the *maṇḍapa* above are now lying in front of the temple. Cut out of granite stone, the pillars are ornamented by a single lotus medallion carved on each of the faces in lowest squares of the pillars Cunningham found six bracket capitals, seven pillar shafts, eight pillar bases and ten pilaster shafts.,[2] suggesting thereby the presence of eight pillars and ten pilasters. The pillars are 2.27 metres in height including both the bases and the capitals. The shaft alone is 1.63 metres,[3] and 40 cms. square below, tapering to 35 cms. above, the whole of the middle portion being octagonal. Both the shafts and the capitals are profusely carved but the workmanship is rough and coarse. Each shaft has a large lotus flower at the top where it joins a similar half flower carved on the face of the two-armed bracket.[4]

Buchanan has mentioned that a look at the temple would indicate "as if the temple had been surrouuded by a colonnade, many pillars lying round it, and there being on all sides some traces of a building, The columns are of granite, and of a curious structure, but do not exceed four feet (1.22 metres) in length"

Cunninghem has, however, hazarded a conjecture as to the

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1. *ASR*, XVI, p. 53. According to Beglar, the *garbhagṛha* measures 8. 53 metres a side externally *ASR*, VIII, p. 548.
1. *ASR*, XVI, p. 53.
3. Buchānaṅ, however, says that they do not exceed 4 feet (i. e. 1.22 metres) in length *(Eastern India*, Vol. I, p. 67). Cuningham suggests that for 'feet' he would read *'hātha* or cubits' (*ASR*, Vol. XVI, d. 54).
4. *ASR*, XVI, pl. XVIII.
5. Buchanan, F., *An Account of the District of Bihar and Patna, in 1811-12* (Patna and Gaya), p. 135.

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arrangement of the eight pillars and ten pilasters within the pillared hall in front of the *garbhagṛha*. According to him, the building or the hall, which if an oblong portico, the whole of the eight pillars and the pilasters may have been arranged in the following manner—(i) an outer row of four pillars with a pilaster at each end, (ii) an inner row of four pilasters with a pilaster at each end and (iii) a row of six pilasters against the wall of the temple.[1] The side pilasters would have rested against two end walls which would have served for the reception of the statues; and the portico would thus have been of the same shape as the present outer room and would have served exactly the same purpose. It may, however, be noted that a similar portico on two rows of pillars are added to the front of the great temple at Nalanda, and another of a single row to the front of the great temple at Bodh-Gaya.

The walls of the temple internally are ornamented by niches, three on each side, doubtlessly meant for holding lamps.

From the point of architecture, the Koñcheśvara temple at Koñch has been compared with the great Mahābodhi temple at Bodh-Gaya. Points of comparison and contrast have been enumerated in detail by Beglar[2] and Cunningham.[3] Externally, the Koñcheśvara temple at Koñch differs from the two great temples at Nalanda and Bodh-Gaya in having its sides curved, instead of being straight-lined from top to bottom. It is consequently more graceful than the temple at Bodh-Gaya. It differs also in its style of ornamentation as there are no niches, and consequently no enshrined figures. Each wall is divided externally into seven faces by deeply recessed upright lines which form part of the original construction. These divisions still remain strongly pronounced while the carved ornamentation is mostly concealed by a general coat of plaster.

The ornamentation externally consists of a great oval on each face, at a point nearly in the middle of the total height of the tower

1. *ASR*, XVI, pl. XVI.
2. *Ibid.*, VIII, pp. 57-58.
3. *Ibid.*, XVI, p. 58.

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proper, and of various mouldings and indentations rather sparingly used. The whole of the ornamentation is of brick cut to shape, and it is evident from the way the ornaments are distributed that the whole of it was cut on the external faces of the tower (*śikhara*) after it had been built up plain. The labour required may easily be imagined from the fact that the face of the brick work is so even that it would not have been possible without subsequent laborious rubbing down, because any amount of care in setting the brick and the preservation of the shape and sharpness of edges of the brick during manufacture could have produced the wonderfully smooth even face that the work has to this day, not withstanding the ravages of the time.[1] The temple does not appear to have been originally covered with plaster, but portions of it are now covered with plaster. This plaster was probably put on when the tall entrance was altered to the present little doorway as the 45 cms. wall in front of the temple was entirely built of bricks laid in lime mortar. When this alternation was made, a new floor was also laid down at a somewhat higher level, so that the Śiva-liṅga now appears standing in a hollow. From this hollow, a small channel leads to the north to carry off the water poured over the Liṅga, The external spout of this channel also still exists on its north side to show that this drain must have formed part of the original construction. From this Beglar argues that the temple must have been a Brahmanical one as libations were not used by the Buddhists.[2] It is true that the Buddhists do not make water libations but certainly make very copious libations of milk for the disposal of which small drains are also equally necessary.[3]

There has, however, been a point of dispute whether the temple at Koñch is a Buddhist or a Brahmanical one. The supporters of the Buddhists say that the Buddhists light up the object of worship, as it appears to have been adopted at Koñch, in contrast to the Brahmanists mode of hiding their gods in the gloom of a dark sanctum which is the

1. *Ibid.*, VIII, p. 57-58.
2 *Ibid.*, VIII. pp. 58 f.
3. *Ibid.*, XVI, p. 55.

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sufficient proof of this temple being a Buddhist one. Beglar in this connection mentions that 'this view is not only not supported by any evidence, but is contradicted by examples elsewhere, in the brick temples of the Central Provinces, notably in the example of Sirpur, which proves that the Brahmanists, as early as perhaps the 5th century, did not hide their gods in the gloom of dark sanctum, but actually adopted precisely the same mode of lighting the object of worship as he supposed to have been adopted by the Buddhists alone. This circumstance shows that on this ground alone the temple at Koñch cannot be considered Buddhist, there is other evidence more conclusive as to its Brahmanical character. The spout for letting out water used in libation by Brahmanists, but not by Buddhists, still exists buried under the accumulations of rubbish at the centre of north side of the temple, and the sculptures lying about are all Brahmanical, so that I conclude that the temple was originally a Brahmanical shrine and not a Buddhist one; the cylinder, therefore, which crowned it could not have been intended as representation of a Buddhist Chaitya,'[1] The Buddhist Chaityas of the period were not tall cylinders like the one as that at Koñch.

It has not yet been definitaly established as to when this temple was originally constructed. According to Beglar, the massiveness of the pillar would show that it must have been built at a very early period. Tradition, however, as recorded by Kittoe, would assign the temple to Bhairavendra, and also suggest that it was dedicated to the worship of Sūrya,

It has been suggested that the Śiva-liṅga inside and the Daśāvatāra panel outside together with the absence of figures of images on the exterior indicated that this Śiva temple was of prior origin to the Buddhist edifices in the Gaya district. The exterior of the temple with the missing cylindrical pinnacle as mentioned by Beglar has further led to the theory that the Koñch temple was the model on which the Mahābodhi temple of Bodh-Gaya was built.

1. *Ibid.*, VIII, p. 58.

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In Hiuen-Tsang's description, this temple is stated to have been built by a Brahmin. He puts the probable date of construction of the temple between the 1st and 2nd centuries A. D. Beglar also advanced argument suggesting the temple to be a Brahmanical one. Cunningham, however, suggested that the date of this temple should be ascribed to the 8th century A. D. He has come to the conclusion from the fact that the great front opening formed by overlapping bricks is like those of Bodh-Gaya temple and the later temples of Deo-Baruṇārak and Mahādeopur, and from its general resemblance in other respect to the Deo-Baruṇārak temple.[1] Th. Bloch, who, visited the area in 1902, considered the temple at Koñch to be of the same period as the temple at Deo and Umgā. The resemblance in style is remarkable. According to the commonly accepted tradition, the temple was built by a ruler named Bhairavendra who is supposed to have lived in 1450 A. D.; but as a matter of fact there is no information as to when this Bhairavendra actually lived. As such, the opinion of Bloch that the temple at Koñch belonged to the 8th century A. D. may be accepted.[2]

Buchanan had visited the temple at Koñch as early as the 3rd December, 1811. He had found huge ruins where the Śiva temple existed. In his opinion, "the temple is of very modern date, as so much of the plaster by which it was encrusted remains entire that it cannot well be above four or five centuries old. It further seems to me to have been built on the ruins of a former temple."[3] This view of Buchanan is obviously unacceptable.

THE MUṆḌEŚVARĪ TEMPLE NEAR BHABHUA :—

The Muṇḍeśvarī hill, named after the temple of Muṇḍeśvarī standing on its summit, is in the vicinity of Ramgarh, a village which lies about 12 kms. southwest of Bhabhua or 8 kms. east of Chainpore

1. *ASR*, XVI, p. 58.
2. *Annual Report, ASI, BC.* 1902, p. 13.
3. Journal of Buchanan, Patna to Gaya in 1811-12, pp. 37-38.

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in the district of Rohtas. The isolated hill rises above the plain to a height of about 183 metres.

The main temple of Muṇḍeśvarī on the hill is represented by the ruins of a Śaiva temple which is octagonal on plan. According to K. C. Panigrahi, the Muṇḍeśvari temple is an early specimen of the Nāgara type of temple architecture available in Bihar.[1] Although a distinct style of temple architecture known as Nāgara style was evolved in Magadha with its centre at Pāṭaliputra, unfortunately specimens of the style even in Bihar are very rare.[2] This gives an added importance to the Muṇḍeśvarī temple, although much of the structure has crumbled down.

As already mentioned, the temple is octagonal on ground plan. The octagonal ground plan for a temple is rather rare. The Śaṅkarāchārya temple of Śrīnagara, built in the 18th century A. D., is another example of this type. The temple is 12.20 metres in diameter externally and 6.10 metres internally, with possibly a pillared porch in front of its main entrance which no longer exists. On the four sides, facing the cardinal points, the temple once had four entrances containing exquisitely carved door-frames, bearing on the lower portion of the door-jambs figures of river goddesses on the eastern side, two figures of Śiva on the western side, representations of Durgā and a female figure on the northern side and figures of Dvārapālakas or doorkeepers on the southern side. In the opinion of Bloch, there were originally two entrances, one on the east, which was the main entrance, and the other opening on the west, which was closed when he had seen the ruins.[3] According to him, on the north and the south sides there were latticed windows. Kuraishi mentions that the eastern entrance is now closed with a masonry grill (*jalī*)[4] : but he does not say where the main entrance lies now. There is thus a discrepancy

1. *JBRS*, XLIV, p. 14.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *An. Rep., ASI, BC.* 1902, p. 20 and 1904, pp. 9-10.
4. Kuraishi, M. M. H., *Lits of Ancient Monuments of Bihar and Orissa*, p. 145.

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which needs to be cleared up. On each of the other four sides of the octagon, on the exterior, are three carved niches flanked by decorative pilasters bearing vase-and-foliage designs. The images, which were once kept in the niches, have since disappeared. Within the *garbhagṛha* of the temple is enshrined a Chaturmkhī-liṅga of Śiva, besides other images, and two large stone vessels meant perhaps for keeping offerings. The original roof of the temple, which was certainly a *śikhara*; is now lost and replaced by a flat roof of stone flags. It had no doubt a full fledged *śikharas*, the type of which had already made its appearance in the 7th century A. D. in other parts of India. The *śikhara* is though no longer in existence, a fragment of the *āmalaka* which had originally crowded the top of the *śikhara* is still lying beside it. Several half *āmalakas* are also found scattered or detached architectural members lying scattered around the monument and these provide an indubitable proof that the *bhūmi-āmalakas* had originally been used on the *śikhara* of the temple. On the Parśurāmeśvara temple at Bhubaneshwar, which is contemporary to the Muṇḍeśvarī temple, the *bhūmi-āmalakas* made their appearnce on the corner facets or pilasters (*konik-pagas*) of the spire at regular intervals of three courses.[1] It may, therefore, be presumed that the *bhūmi-āmalakas* occupied similar positions on the Muṇḍeśvarī temple.

As already noted above, the *śikhara* of the Muṇḍeśvarī temple has already disappeared, and in the place of large smooth-ashlar work the P. W. D. of British Government crowned it with low parapet of undressed or roughly dressed masonry, sufficient indications remaining to prove that this building is a post-Gupta-structure.[2] According to R. D. Banerji, the most noticeable feature in the Mundeśvarī temple is its plan which is neither square nor circular but hexagonal.[3] (As a matter of fact, was already observed, the plan of the temple is not hexagonal rather it is octagonal).

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1. *JBRS*, XLIV, pp. 18-19; *JRASB*, XV, pp. 110 f.
2. Banerji, R, D., *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 157.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

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Kuraishi has given a detailed and graphic description of the temple with the following words.[1] 'externally the temple measures 40 feet (i.e. 12.20 metres) in diameter. The walls as well as the pillars of the cornice flanking the entrances are relieved with bold mouldings which for the size of the building appear rather too heavy. The bases and pilasters of the capital flanking the exterior niches are carved with vase-and-foliage design and the lintel above them are ornamented with floral carvings. Above the niches are the pediment-shaped shrine roofs (canopies). The images which once adorned these niches have all disappeared. Of the four entrances in the temple that on the east is closed with the masonry *jālī*. The door-jambs and lintels are all carved with exquisite floral designs, and at the bottom of the door jambs stand figures of the Dvārāpālakas on the south, two figures of Śiva on the west, Gaṅgā and Yamunā on the east and Durgā and other female figure on the north Inside the temple is an octagon of 20 feet (i e. 12. 10 metres) diameter, the walls being 10 feet (i. e. 6.05 metres) thick. In four of the walls are doors and window openings and in the other four very small niches probably for lamps. The roof is a recent restoration and consists of stone flags, the central portions resting on beams of lofty pillars, which are square at the base and at the top and octagonal in the middle. The floor is paved with stone slabs and in its centre is the four feet (i. e. 1.22 metres) high Chaturmukhī-liṅga of Śiva."

The date of the Muṇḍeśvarī temple is still a matter of controversy, which is based partly on the style of architecture and partly on an inscription found in the vicinity of the temple itself which was found in two halves and presently preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. The inscription bears a date, 22nd Kārttika of the year 30 (of an unspecified era), which has been referred to the Harṣa era by R. D. Banerji as well as by Bloch'[2] corresponding to 635-36 A.D. The reigning chief was Udayasena and the inscription

1. Kuraishi, *List of Ancient Monuments of Bihar and Orissa*, pp. 144-45.
2. *An. Rep. ASI, BC*, 1904, part II, p. 9.

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records the building of a temple of Nārāyaṇa, close to the temple of Viniteśvara, and the daily allotment of two *prasthas* of rice and *palas* of oil for sacrificial purposes to the temple of Maṇḍaleśvara and a sum of five hundred *dinaras* for the maintenance of the same. The donor's name is Gomibhaṭṭa who held the post of Daṇḍanāyaka. Evidently the temples are still represented by some scattered remains of buildings which show that the small hill was once covered with a cluster of shrines of which only the main temple has now remained. Whether this was the temple referred to in the inscription under the name of Maṇḍaleśvara is difficult to say. The word Maṇḍaleśvara evidently refers to a certain form of Īśvara or Śiva. R. D. Banerji has referred the year 30 to the Harṣa era beginning in 606 A.D, and has thus assigned the inscription to 636 A.D [1] which he also takes to be the date of the temple. His view has, however, not been shared by other scholars. There is no reason to make the inscription a close contemporary of the temple which in fact was not found attached to the temple itself. N. G. Majumdar assigned the inscription palaeographically to the early Gupta period and has referred the year 30 to the Gupta era, the date of the inscription being 349 A.D.[2] D. R. Bhandarkar has accepted the date with some remarks of his own.[3] He is not in favour of assigning it to the 7th century A. D. but his remarks rather indicate that he considers it even earlier than the 4th century A.D., which, for obvious reasons, cannot be accepted.

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE OF THE BARABAR HILLS :

One of the highest peaks of the Barabar range of hills, locally known as Suryāṅka, about 26 kms. north-east of Gaya, the chief town of the Gaya district, is crowned by a temple dedicated to the worship of Śiva, under the name of Siddheśvaranātha.[4] Standing on the original basement of a temple of great antiquity, it contains a

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1. *EI*, Vol. IX, pp. 289 ff.
2. *IA*, Vol, XLIX, 1920, pp. 21 ff.
3. *List of North Indian Inscriptions*, No. 1257, p. 170, f. n. 4.
4. *ASR*, I, p. 40; *ASR*, VIII, pp. 36-37; Buchanan, *Patna-Gaya*, p. 246; *Bengal List*, p. 316.

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Liṅga of Śiva inside the shrine. Among the images collected within the premises of the temple included an image of the four-armed goddess Durgā having a lion as her vehicle. On this image, Beglar noticed an inscription 'in what may be Gupta characters'.[1] A later Gupta inscription incised in the Vāpi cave of the Nāgārjunī hill refers to a teacher named Yogānanda as having offered his homage to Siddheśvara,[2] presumably to the Liṅga of that name in the temple on the Barabar hill. The original temple may, therefore, have been at least as old as the 7th century A. D. or even earlier. Local legend would, however, attribute the installation of the Liṅga to Bāna Rājā, the father-in-law of the king Jarāsandha of Rājagṛha.

Close to this temple was another temple of which only the traces of the foundation exist.[3] This temple was also a temple of Śiva as was evident from a Liṅga and fragments of other statues.[4]

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT DEOKUND :

Deokund is an important historic place lying about 40 kms. north-west of Gaya. The place is referred to by Beglar as having once been situated on the bank of the old bed of river Son.[5] The Bengal List states that there is a small Śiva temple with its shrine sunk in 'the mass of brick rubbish' and having a Śiva-liṅga inside.[6] It appears that the temple is situated on an ancient mound about which further particulars are not available. The shrine is presently surrounded by a rude dome but the lower part is still intact.[7] The Bengal List[8] further

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1. *ASR*, VIII, pp. 36 f.
2. *Āchārya Śrī Yogānanda Pranamati Siddheśvara*, referring obviously to the Liṅga of Śiva, still in worship, in a ruined temple on one of highest peaks of the Barabar hills close by.
3. *ASR*, VIII, p. 36.
4. *Ibid.*, p, 36.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.
6. *Bengal List*, p, 332,
7. *Ibid*
8. Grierson, *Notes on the District of Gaya*; p. 41.

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adds that the existing temple probably dates from the 7th century A.D. 'The site is one of the most ancient ones which have been identified in the Patna division'. It is, however, difficult to say as to how such a conclusion has been arrived at,

THE ŚIVA TEMPLES AT RAJAONA :

Till recently an insignificent place, Chauki by name, situated in the close vicinity of Rajaona, shot into importance overnight due to an accidental discovery of a black-basalt Śiva liṅga by a cowherd boy there The magnificent size of the Śiva-liṅga gained considerable popularity for it, so much so that it has been continually attracting worshippers and speedy effort is being made to construct a temple for housing the Liṅga.

Rajaona is already known to be a village of archaeological importance from where a few years back several fragments of stone sculptures depicting the scene of Arjuna's penance was discovered. These sculptures, now housed in the Indian Museum at Calcutta, are artistically of great merit and speak highly of the anonymous artist who transformed the crude mass of stone into such wonderful pieces of art. As a matter of fact, the region around Rajaona in the Lakhisarai sub-division of the district of Monghyr is hedged in with a number of places of archaeological significance. To mention a few, Balgudar, Nongarh, Jayanagar, Birdaban and others, besides Rajaona itself, have contributed their mite in the archaeological sphere of the state. Rajaona is situated near the junction of the river Kiul with the old Ganges or Halluhar, 3 kms. north-west of Lakhisarai Railway Station. It has been identified by Cunningham as the probable site of Lo-in-ni-lo monastery visited by Hiuen-Tsang in the 7th century A.D [1] 'According to him, the place possessed of a monastery and a stūpa of Aśoka with a lake 30 li or 8 kms in circuit lying two or three or rather less than half a kilometre to the north of the stūpa.[2] Cunningham noticed several mounds and images at Rajaona, principal among them

1. *ASR*, III.
2. Julien, *Huien-Tsang*, III, p. 363.

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being the images of Haragaurī, Gaṇeśa, four-armed Viṣṇu and Kālī, all of black stone. Earlier Cunningham had partially excavated a lofty square mound to the west of Rajaona and noticed there a Śiva temple. Some inscriptions were found engraved on a pillar and on an image in perpendicular line which belonged to the 7th or 8th century A. D.

The remains of an ancient Brahmanical temple have also been noticed at the site. The burnt-brick floors set in lime and surkhi mortar have also been noticed. The size of the bricks used in this temple is 33 cms. x 24 cms. x6. 25 cms. The shrine chamber is about 7.62 metres square, which includes structure having walls 81 cms. in thickness. It is made of the large sized bricks set in mud mortar. Probably it contained only one doorway facing towords the east which was about 1·5 metres in width. There are numerous sculptures on the same mound near the temple, representing Viṣṇu, Trivikrama, Sūrya, Gaṇeśa, Navagrahas and Saptamātṛkās. Various small sized Liṅgas of black basalt are found being worshipped under the shade of the trees in the village of Rajaona and also at Chauki.

Remains of another small temple of Śiva are still found at Rajaona on a lofty mound close by the Baniyāhī *pokhara*, about 275 metres east of the recently discovered Śiva temple at Chaukī. To the north of this Śiva temple there is a very large mound, strewn with burnt bricks The small Śiva temple is quite similar to the Śiva temple the remains of which have been found at Chaukī. It has also a Śiva-liṅga enshrined in the *garbhagṛha*, fixed in the centre of the Yonī-pedestal. Both the Liṅga and the Yonī-pedestal are made of black basalt.

To the west of the small Śiva temple at Rajaoṇa. hardly at a distance of 7.62 metres from it, there is a, large sized image of Gaṇeśa installed on a small mound, The mound, which contains bricks and potsherds, also shows the remains of some shrine, but due to severely damaged condition, the size of the shrine could not be ascertained. However, the image of Gaṇeśa, carved out of black basalt, is in a much better state of preservation. The god, who has been shown

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seated, is holding a radish in his upper right hand, a rosary in the lower right hand and an elephant goad in the upper left hand while he holds his own long and heavy trunk by his lower left hand, which is a feature not generally seen in the images of the god. He wears *dhotī* and is adorned with numerous ornaments.

Cunningham[1] and D. C. Sircar[2] have referred to a number of inscriptions discovered at Rajaona, which bear the name of the Pāla ruler Madanapāla, which may suggest that the ruins of the temples at Rajaona and in its neighbourhood may be dated in the later Pāla Period.

THE ŚIVE TEMPLES AT RAJGIR :–

Rajgir, the ancient capital of Magadha, before it shifted to Pāṭaliputra in the time of Udāyin, the son and successor of Ajātaśatru, is studded with ruins of ancient monuments which are datable in between the 6th century B. C. and the 12th century A. D.

The ruins of the old Mahādeva temple at Rajgir are to be found at a short distance to the south of the Jaina temple over the Vaibhāra hill. This is obviously the temple which Broadley described under the name of a Buddist temple and of which he also furnished a plan.[3] The temple was later on cleared of the debris, and its description has been given by Kuraishi.[4] The temple originally consisted of a sanctum (*garbhagṛha*), 3.50 metres square internally,[5] preceded by an almost square pillared hall, about 7.50 metres square.[6] Inside the sanctum is enshrined a small Śiva-liṅga fixed in the usual Yonī-pedestal in the centre and a figure of Nandi (śiva's bull) to its east; and a miniature

1. *ASR*, III.
2. Sircar, D. C., *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Mediaeval India.* p. 193.
3. Broadley, A. M., *The Buddhist Remains of Bihar*, pp. 32-33. (This work was first published in 1872).
4. Kuraishi, *Ancient Monuments of Bihar and Orissa*, pp. 125-26.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
6. Broadley, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

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shrine lying close by. The roof of the sanctum is flat, made up of stone flags, supported on stone beams and brackets resting on four lofty pillars of granite, The pillars are square at the base, octagonal in the middle and square again near the top. Twelve similar pillars, four on each side, have been found built into the brick walls of the sanctum. The pillars are all quite plain, without there being any ornamentation. The door lintel is, however, relieved with simple mouldings, and the lower portions of the door jambs have been carved with two female figures, one of which probaly represents the goddess Gaṅgā, the other figure being too blurred. The *śikhara* of the temple had long disappeared.[1]

In front of this sanctum, there originally stood a pillared hall (*maṇḍapa*) of which the granite pillars, arranged in six rows of five each, are still standing. According to Broadley, "its roof is supported by twelve columns in the chamber (i. e. pillared, hall), and eighteen more let into the brick-work. These columns are each 2.13 metres with square bases and capitals and octagonal shafts. They rested on a detached square plinth 30 cms. hight. A sur-capital, separate from the shaft and cruciform in plan, supported the roof which was composed of enormous granite slabs laid transversely.[2] In the words of Kuraishi, "These pillars are roughly dressed and are square up to a height of 1 metre, octagonal above, and square again near the top. They are about 3.65 metres high and decrease in thickness as they rise, being 36 cms. square at the base and 25 cms. square at the top."[3] From the pillared hall, a massive doorway and a flight of three steps led into the interior of the sanctum-'somewhat less in size than the other (i- e. the pillared hall), but considerably loftier—the total height of its roof being 4 metres,"[4] As already seen, the pillars in the sanctum are also of the same description. "The detached capital are each 30

1. Kuraishi, *op. cit.*, pp, 125-26.
2. Broadley, *op, cit.*, p. 33.
3. Kuraishi, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
4. Broadley, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

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cms. high, the base is 60 cms. the octagonal shaft 1.82 metres and the second capital 92 cms. in height. The lintel of the doorway is 60 cms. broad."[1]

The temple faces towards the east, the entrance to the hall having been provided by a doorway about 1.83 metres wide, which led into a passage some 4.50 metres long, the roof of which was formerly supported on grey stone pillars about 1.83 metres high.[2]

The Mahādeva temple at Rajgir shows two periods of construction. Kuraishi found a brick enclosure to the east of the shrine, which, in his opinion, was a modern restoration erected for the purpose of the frosteration of the granite pillars which supported the roof of the *maṇḍapa* and the porch in front. The enclosure in front of the temple measured 8.53 metres square. At the same time, the door at the entrance was narrowed down to 1·21 metres only, the original door jambs being still indicated by two pillars, embedded within the latter bricks.[3]

Neither Kuraishi nor A. Ghosh has given the age of the temple, the former having mentioned it 'of late mediaeval period. From the general features of the temple, its pillars and carvings on its lintel and door jambs, the temples may be assigned to the 11th-12th century A.D.

There exist the remains of a highly interesting and at the same time unique specimen of architecture occupying a prominent position inside the hill girt city of Rajgir popularly known by the name of Maniyāra Maṭha. Situated almost in the centre of the enclosure of the 'inner city', the name Maniyāra Maṭha was originally applied to a small Jaina shrine built on the top of an artificial brick mound, 6

1. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Ghosh. A., *Rajgir*, pp. 17-18.

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metres high.[1] Cunningham, who had visited the mound in 1861-62 and realised its antiquarian importance, was told by the local people that the mound had within its bosom hidden a great treasure, and he had actually seen a Punjabi sepoy excavating at the site on his own apperently in search of the treasure.[2] Buchanan states that Śrenika or Bimbisāra is believed 'to have had thirty two wives to each of which he daily gave new ornaments, and they threw the old ones into a well which is still shown, and they suppose that a fortunate Moslem afterwards discovered the prize. This well is covered by a small temple of the Jaina, quite modern.[3]

Believing the mound to be representing an old Buddhist Stūpa, cunningham sank a shaft near the Maṭha with a gradual inclination towards the centre.[4] He excavated to a depth of 6·55 metres and discovered a bricklined well, 10 feet in diameter, filled with a mere mass of rubbish. At a depth of 5.8 metres from the surface, he recovered three small figures, representing the ascetic Buddha with Māyā lying on a couch, the Jaina Tirthaṅkara Pārśvanātha standing nude with a seven-hooded serpent hood, and a crude figure which could not be identified.[5]

Bloch, however, excavated the mound most extensively in 1905-06, by dismantling the Jaina structure above. He exposed the exterior of a massive masonry structure-the circular structure or well, previously traced by Cunningham.[6] Around the base of the exterior of the circular structures, Bloch exposed some ten stucco images, arranged in niches, separated by the pilasters, which, on account of the fragile condition of the material, have now practically disappeared. These

1. Kuraishi, M. M. H., *Ancient Monuments of Bihar and Orissa*, pp 131 ff., *ASR*, I, p. 26.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Buchanan, *Patna-Gaya*, I, pp. 179 ff.
4. *ASR*, I, p. 26.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *ASIAR*, 1905-06, pp. 103-04.

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images were on an average 60 cms. in height, and represented (1) a *Śiva-liṅga* bearing a garland of flowers and standing on a circular base of the shape of a flower pot, (ii) a crowned four-armed figure of Viṣṇu with the hands broken, standing on rocks, (iii) a Nāgī and five Nāgas canopied by serpent hoods, (iv) Gaṇeśa seated on rocks with cobras twisted around his body, and (v) a nude six-armed Śiva dancing, bearing a cobra and arranged in a tiger skin. It is significant to note that the majority of the figures represent snake—deities (i.e. Nāgas or Nāgīs) and the rest of them are Śaivite, excepting a solitary figure of Viṣṇu.[1] From the artistic style, the images have much to compare with the stucco images found on the Main Temple (Site No. 3) at Nalanda, and they have, therefore, been assigned to the Gupta period (i.e. 4th to 6th centuries A.D.)[2] The circular structure was found to be protected by a conical tile-roof, though this may have been a later change. Bloch was not sure how the original building was finished off, though a number of 'carved tiles found among the debris show that the roof rested on an ornamental drum, of which a small portion still remains in one place.'[3]

On account of the unique character of the monument, the Maniyār Maṭha was excavated again in the year 1938 or so.[4] The excavations conducted at the site revealed that the main monument had undergone certain stages of construction in different periods. The curious monument was composed of two concentric walls Originally, there was the inner walling only, with perhaps a low platform around it, the outer wall being added at some subsquent date when the ground around the original structure had risen, The original structure was of a hollow cylindrical shape made up of a well; 1·22 metres in thickness with its inner surface quite smooth and with four short cardinal points. This part of the building may have been constructed some time

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1. *Ibid.*
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. Kuraishi, M. M. H., *Rajgir* (in Hindi), pp. 21 ff; Kabir, H. *Indian, Archaeology*, p. 56,

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before the 4th or the 5th Century A.D., but to what religion or cult it was dedicated is not clear from the excavation. It is also curious to note that no entrance was originally provided for giving access into it.

Some time in the 5th or 6th century A. D., a wall with elaborate mouldings was constructed upon the outer face of the earlier structure (i.e. the inner wall). The foundations of this outer wall rested upon the old platform, which was slightly raised for the purpose. It was built with receding courses and was left rough on the interior. It was this wall which Bloch had exposed in 1905-06 with the stucco images carved around its base.[1] A door was also now provided through the wall for giving access into the interior of the cylindrical structure. That this later construction followed the plan of the earlier cylindrical structure, with provision for access into its interior, is a fact to be reckoned with. It is thus obvious that the original structure as well as this later erection were dedicated to the same cult or religion. The cylindrical structure, with the stucco figure all around the exterior of its base and having a hollow circular interior, partly underground with only a small entrance leading into it down below and with perhaps a conical tiled roof above, was something quite strange and unique, little heard of elsewhere among the monuments of ancient India. It is obvious that it was a shrine dedicated either to Śiva or to a Snake deity, and was originally erected during the first few centuries of the Christian era.

The subsequent developments at the Maniyār Maṭha are very confusing. It appears that the cylindrical building of the shrine, with the stucco figures on it, was later on encased by another circular wall, a phenomenon quite common in case of the Buddhist *stūpas*. The next stage was a change in the plan of the building itself which was now made oblong with a projection on the northern side, apparently to provide for a flight of steps to give access to the shrine above. But how those subsquent changes affected the earlier cylindrical shaped shrine, with a circular hollow interior, is not clear. Since, the floor of

1. *An, Rep., ASI, BC*, 1905-06, pp. 14-15.

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this original shrine is far below into the ground, it appears more than likely that the hollow was now totally filled up and perhaps some sort of a temple may have been erected on the oblong platform facing north and approached by a flight of steps as already referred to. Even this structure of oblong plan seems to have undergone some changes as seen in the walls and the different levels of the staircases. The next development at the monument is a circular wall at the top, which kept itself concentric with the original cylindrical shrine. It was observed that throughout these changes and additions, the plan of the original shrine was always kept in view by the later builders. It is, therefore, quite likely that with all these developments, the sanctuary continued to be dedicated to the same faith or cult, although this is not quite clear from the informations furnished by A. Ghosh. Nor is it clear as to the respective dates or periods through which these various changes had been taking place.

It may, however, be mentioned that in course of the excavations conducted by Bloch, a small image was recovered while the Jaina temple was being dismantled. It represents a seated Nāga, containing an inscription dated V. S 1547 (i. e. 1490 A. D).[1] It is evident that the sanctuary continued to exist with its original religious affiliation till the end of the 15th century A. D.

The continued existence of this great shrine over a period of about fifteen hundred years must have been backed with a strong religious force behind it. According to Bloch, it was some kind of pantheon of Rājagṛha where the serpent deities were in worship as a popular religion of the local people.[2] It may, however, be noted that within the premises of the Maniyār Maṭh, all around the main shrine, were discovered numerous low brick built altars or platforms, circular, oblong or square, which may have served some religious or

1. *An. Rep., ASI, BC,* 1905-06, pp. 14 ff.
2. *Ibid.*

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ritualistic purpose.[1] Near one of these platforms were found scattered numerous pottery jars of strange shapes and designs, containing spouts in the shape of snake hoods or having long necks, or row of earthen lamps in addition to the spouts.[2] In none of the ancient sites of India, such pottery jars have so far been discovered, though similar jars with spouts are still used in Bengal while offering worship to the snake-goddess Manasā. Numerous terracotta snake-hoods were discovered in the excavations from the premises of the monument.[3] Just to the west of the main shrine was discovered another brick shrine, showing four periods of construction. While excavating the site, an interesting sculpture carved in the well-known red sandstone of Mathura was obtained. What is of particular significance is that the sculpture contains a mutilated inscription bearing the names '*Maninaga*' and 'Bhagini Sumagadhi'. On yet another piece found close by are inscribed the words: 'Parvata Vipula' and 'Rājā Śreṇika'.[4] The inscriptions are datable in the 1st or 2nd century A. D. The overwhelming number of snake figures and terracotta snake-hoods along with the interesting discovery of the sculpture actually referring to 'Maninaga' leave hardly any doubt that the main shrine at Maniyār Maṭh was in fact dedicated to the worship of the snake-deity. It is to be noted in this connection that the *Mahābhārata* mentions a shrine of Maninaga at Rājagṛha. The modern name of Maniyār Maṭh seems to have been obviously derived from the name of the deity installed in the great shrine. And the fact that even a late Jaina temple continued to be called by that name clearly indicates the halo of antiquity and importance attached to the site. How the enshrined deity was installed in the temple and how it was worshipped in its cylindrical interior, and when the temple fell into disuse, is still a mystery to be solved.

The last phase of the construction at the monument is to be

1. *ASIAR*, 1935-36, p.53.
2. *Ibid*,, 1935-36, p. 53, pl, XVI. c-e.
3. *Ibid.*, pl. XVI, f.
4. *JBORS*, XXII, 1936, pp. 79-80; Kuraishi, M. M. H., *Rajgir*, p. 23.

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found in a stone retaining wall seen in traces on the south and west of the Maṭha. It is, however, not known under what circumstances this retaining wall was erected, and whether it was connected with the Jaina temple found atop the mound or with some later development in the construction of the earlier shrine is not certain. The Jaina temple stood conspicuously at the top of the mound, and from the inscription on a basalt slab found in the debris, the Jaina temple appears to have been erected in V. S. 1837 (i. e. 1781 A. D.)[1] The slab contains two foot-prints, which, according to the inscription itself, were those of Nāga Śālibhadra, and were put up by a lady named Sītābāī at Rājagṛha.[2] The new temple, though a Jaina one, was thus dedicated not to a Jaina Tīrthaṅkara, as is usual with the Jainas, but Nāga Śālibhadra, who, it is said, amongst the Jainas, buried his treasures inside the well (i. e. the cylindrical interior of the shrine) It is, therefore, quite interesting that the original serpent worship was still continued though in an altered form by the Jainas and even the original name Maniyār Maṭh (after the name of Maninaga) was retained as the name of their shrine.

It may, however, be noted in this context that Bloch's excavations had mad it amply clear that the monument at Rajgir was not a Buddhist *stūpa*, as Cunningham had earlier believed; rather, it was really a Hindu monument of peculiar construction with an interesting religious background, quite unique in itself.[3] Marshall, however, was inclined to regard the entire structure as 'a colossal liṅga'.[4] As a parallel, he points to the colossal liṅga at Fatehgarh, near Baramula, in Kashmir, which was also decorated with figures carved in relief around it.[5] Recently, Fraderick M. Asher has also expressed his opinion that the

1. Kuraishi, M, M. H., *Ancient Monuments of Bihar and Orissa*, p. 134; *An. Rep., ASI. BC*, 1905-06, pp. 14-15.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *ASIAR*, 1904-05, p. 105.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*

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Maniyāra Maṭha may have actually been a Śaiva shrine.[1] According to him : "Though a Nāga shrine in one sense, the Maniyār Maṭha probably was dedicated to Śiva, and the cylider served as an enormous *liṅga*, the phallic emblem of Śiva. This structure adorned with figures around its circumference recalls the appearance of a type of image widely known from Bihar in the east to Rajasthan in the west identified by J. N. Banerjea as the *pañchāyatana-liṅga*."[2] Thus if the identification of the Maniyāra Maṭha be accepted as a Śaiva shrine, Rajgir would appear to be a very important centre of Śiva's worship from a very early period, at least from the time of the imperial Guptas.

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT MAHADEOPUR :–

There exists an old temple of Śiva (Mahādeva) in the small and obscure village of Mahādeopur in the district of Bhojpur, situated at a distance of about 16 kms, in a straight line south of Piro and about 12 kms. north of Deo-Mārkaṇḍeya. Described as the most curious specimen of architecture by Cunningham,[3] who first saw the temple in the beginning of the last quarter of the 19th century, the temple is built entirely of bricks. On plan, the Mahādeopur temple is a dodekagon (having twelve sides), being 7.32 metres in diameter at the base up to a height of 1.21 metres above, which lessens to 6.10 metres by eight receding courses of bricks up to 2.13 metres from the ground, above which it is circular for 2.44 metres. At 4.57 metres above the ground, it becomes square with deeply indented angles and with the usual projection in the middle of each face.[4] This upper part has a curved slope inwards on all four sides after what is called the usual Hindu fashion. The temple is also provided with an upper storey surmounted by a *kalaśa* or pinnacle of singular design which

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1. Asher, F. M., *The Art of Eastern India*. p. 25.
2. For detailed discussion, see *Ibid.*, pp. 23-26.
3. *ASR*, XVI, pp. 62 ff.
4. *Ibid*, XVI, pp. 62 ff, *Ibid.*, XIX, pl. II.

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in general appearance resembles two huge mushrooms one above the other.

When Cunningham had seen the temple at Mahādeopur, its lower half had already been much ruined. The temple faces towards the east, with a very low entrance doorway, being only 91 cms. in width and 1.52 metres in height and covered by a triangular opening of overlapping bricks in seven courses. The shrine chamber (*garbhagṛha*) on the ground floor is 2.54 meters from north to south and 2.65 metres from east to west internally.

The shrine chamber (*garbhāgṛha*) contains a small Liṅga of Śiva (Mahādeva), after which the village seems to have been named as Mahādeopur (Mahādevapur). The wall of this edifice at the base is remarkably massive being 1.57 metre thick at the centre of the lower chamber. The plan of the shrine chamber, as is evident from the measurements noted above, at the base diminishes by steps or degree until the floor of the upper chamber, 4.57 metres above the ground, is reached where it assumes the ordinary obelisked shape and is finally crowned by the pinnacle (*kalaśa*). The wall of the upper chamber is only 1.06 metres in thickness, but the doorway to this chamber is 1.78 metres high, i. e, 30 cms. in excess of the entrance to the lower chamber. Much similar to the entrance of the lower chamber, it is spanned by six courses of overlapping bricks.[1] The roof of this chamber also appears to have been vaulted. The total height of the structure, including the pinnacle, as given by Garrick,[2] is 12.88 metres, of which the pinnacle itself is rather disproportionately high (i. e. nearly 3.91 metres), measuring 2.31 metres in diameter. The pinnacle (or *kalaśa*) of the temple, as already observed, is of novel design, being formed of seven successive circles of overlapping

1. *ASR.*, XVI, pp.
2. According to Garrick, the height of the lower chamber is 2.97 metres. the height, of the upper, chamber 6 metres, and the height of the pinnacle 3.91 metres, thus making a total of 12. 88 metres in height (*ASR* XIX, pp. 14 f.). According to Cunningham's estimate, the chamber temple stood 13-72 metres high (*ASR*, XVI, pp. 62 f,).

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bricks, which support a hemisphere or half-dome surmounted by a smaller figure of the same form.

The most curious part of this temple is the lower storey with its twelve sides and receding walls. This appears to have been a subsequent addition to save the temple from falling after the outer walls had crumbled away. The true shape of the original building would seem to have been the same as that of the upper storey and the line of junction of the old and the new works, about midway in the lower doorway passage can be seen. However, the lower half of the temple has been much injured or demaged by the failure of several parts of the facing.

Garrick made a comparison of the Mahādeopur temple with the Mahābodhi temple at Bodh-Gaya, and he was so struck by their similarities in many respects, including their general appearance and style of worksmanship, that he assigned the Mahādeopur temple to the same period as the Bodh-Gaya temple.[1] Among the features, in which the Mahādeopur temple correspond wilh the Bodh-Gaya temple, Garrick has mentioned the following—

(i) It has two chembers one above the other in common with the Mahābodhi temple at Bodh-Gaya, (ii) the upper chamber is corbelled in exactly similar fashion, (iii) the doorways are build of overlapping bricks, (iv) though on a greatly reduced scale, Garrick found strong resemblance in the abstract proportion of the building to its colossal neighbour of Bodh-Gaya, and lastly, (v) the pinnacle of the Mahādeopur temple appears to be exactly like that of the Bodh-Gaya temple.

Beglar has compared the Mahādeopur temple, particularly its pinnacle with the temple at Koñch in the district of Gaya. However, as is evident from plate V in Garrick's Report, the finial of the Mahādeopur temple can very well be compared with that of the third temple of Deo-Barṇārak also.

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1. *ASR*, XIX, pp. 16 f. *BODG*, Shahabad, p. 172.

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Local tradition records that the temple at Mahādeopur was constructed by two Kāyastha brothers named Rāimal and Sāimal; but unfortunately nothing particular is known as to their date and history.

THE ŚIVA TEMPL AT BAIDYANĀTHA :—

The village of Baidyanātha, locally known as Baijnath, is situated about 10 kms. to the south of Ramgrh in the district of Rohtas. That Baidyanātha must have been a place of considerable importance in ancient times is attested by a number of mounds strewn with bricks in the vicinity of the village. Buchanan has referred to the ancient ruins of Baidyanātha.[1] To the west of the village, there stood on a large mound a comparatively modern temple of Śiva built of materials taken from a more ancient temple, and standing at the same site, when Garrick had visited the place.[2] He had excavated part of the mound in 1882 and exposed the remains of the ancient temple. According to him, from what he could discern by the partial excavation, "the original temple must have had a large portion in front (or to the east) supported upon a number of columns, a shrine or *mahā-maṇḍapa* in the centre, and a line of priests, cells to the west behind the edifice, the whole being surrounded by a massive wall about 120 feet (3.05 metres) from north to south and 100 feet (2. 4 metres) from east to west."[3] The existing temple on the mound was "in design, originally, a simple cube of about 3.65 metres, but to this has been added, of late years, a very ugly pyamidal shaped top,"[4] While constructing the later temple and the wall, which surrounds the mound, numerous carvings and sculptures of the orginal temple had been used most indiscriminately, 'a medley of sculptures in every imaginable position, used hapazard in lieu of bricks or stones.'[5]

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1. Buchanan, *Shahabad*, pp. 143-45, Martin, *Eastern India*, pp.463-65.
2. *ASR*, XIX, pp. 28 ff,
3. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
5. *Ibid.*

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In the carved scenes, Garrick observed "several indecencies which in Southern India have been carried to such a gross length, and which have been avoided in the more ancient temples of Bihar.[1] The scenes included representations like mother suckling a child, a female churning butter, a porter carrying a load, a man riding on a snake.[2] Obviously, the scenes represented on the stone obelisks seem to have been associated with the incidents drawn from the life of Kṛṣṇa.

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT DARAULI :—

The village of Darauli is situated about 10 kms. north-west of Ramgarh in the district of Rohtas. The most conspicuous remains at Darauli consist of two small temples and a large mound, called *Kot* or *Gadh* and a large tank, 396 metres in length and somewhat less in breadth, close by.[3] Of the two temples as described by Garrick, the first temple, measured 4.8 metres from north to south and 4.7 metres from east to west, and the second temple, 11 metres from north to south and 7.11 metres from east to west.[4] The first temple, at the time of Garrick's visit, still retained its brick walls to a height of about 1.50 metres.[5] Being filled with mud and debris, it had assumed the form of a mound. Atop the mound were seen four stone obelisks, averaging 1.22 metres high and carved on all the four faces. There remained only the foundation of the second temple, almost wholly deprived of its walls.[6] At the entrance of this temple was lying stone placed to serve as a door-step, but which originally formed the lintel of the door-way. The stone pieces contained a Sanskrit inscription of three lines, a portion of which only was preserved and could be deciphered.[7] Among the ruins were also found numerous sculptures

1. Martin, *Eastern India*, p. 464.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Buchanan, Shahabad, pp. 141-42, cf. Also Martin, *Eastern India*, pp. 462-63 *BODG*, *Shahabad*, p. 166; *Bengal List*, p. 360.
4. *ASR*, XIX, p. 25.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *ASR*, XIX, pp. 25-26.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

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including those of Ganeśa, Śiva-liṅga, Boar Incarnation of Viṣṇu; Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Pārvatī, etc.

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT ROHTAS :—

Rohtas, famous for the fort of Sher Shah, is closely associated with Rohitāśva, the son and successor of the famous king Hariśchandra of the solar race who is known to have ruled over Ayodhyā in north-eastern Uttar Pradesh. The temple at Rohtas, known as the Rohitāsan temple, commands an extensive view on the summit of a small but steep hillock to the north-east of the palace.[1] It stands on the basement of a high terrace, measuring 27.89 metres from east to west and 16.46 metres from north to south, approached by a grand staircase of eighty-three steps flanked by walls on either side. Above this terrace is another terrace about 15.24 metres by 15.36 metres high. This was covered by the dome of a *maṇḍapa* which has now disappeared. A broken figure of a bull (Nandi) is placed on the floor of the *maṇḍapa*. The structure consisted of a sanctum, 8.53 metres square externally and 4 15 metres square internally, which was preceded by the pillared hall (*maṇḍapa*), now completely gone. The plinths of the temple and the hall are both relieved with bold horizontal mouldings. Each side of the square sanctum breaks forward in four small projections as in the Orissan temples, and on the central projections are carved small figures of fighting elephants. The walls are decorated with bold mouldings broken by deep vertical grooves and horizontal chases, which continue to produce an artistic effect of light and shade. In each of the central projection on the north, south and east is a niche which formerly contained images of minor deities. The temple was obviously surmounted by a tower or *śikhara*, which has disappeared already. The door frame also bears some ornamentation in floral patterns, a few figures of geese in pairs holding lotus buds in their joined beaks, two small figures of door-keepers (*dvārapālas*) and a figure of Gaṇeśa on the dedicatory block of the lintel.

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1. Martin, *Eastern India*, I, p. 438; Kuraishi; *List of Ancient Monuments of Bihar and Orissa*, pp. 169-70.

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Inside the sanctum, there are four square pillars built into the walls, on which an octagon is formed by beams laid across the nearest pillars at each corner, and the roof is formed in the usual Hindu style by arranging the slabs in diminishing octagons. There is no image in the temple, but a rough broken stone, partly buried in the floor, is worshipped as Śiva's Liṅga.

According to Martin,[1] the great staircase providing access to the temple cannot be older than the time of Man Singh who lived at Rohtas between 1586 and 1606 A. D., but the temple is evidently much older, may be ascribed to the 10th-11th century A. D.

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT DAPTHU :—

Dapthu is a village situated at a distance of about 4 kms. south-west of Islampur in the district of Patna, Broadley, who had visited the place in about 1872, mentioned that the Kṛṣṇa temple was then standing in a precarious condition, while the tower of the Sūrya temple had fallen,[2] indicating the damaged condition of the two temples at the time of his visit. Buchanan, who has furnished a detailed account of the ruins at Dapthu, referred to a row of four temples running in a line from north to south, situated obviously along the western side of the dried up tank (which Broadley had seen later on), the mound being on its north.[3] While the first temple (i. e. the temple further north) was a Śiva temple, the second temple was dedicated to the worship of Sūrya and the third and the fourth temples to Kanhaiyā (Kṛṣṇa).

The first temple consisted of one chamber supported by antique columns of granite and having a highly ornamented doorway. Inside was an enormous Liṅga of Śiva and a representation of Gaurī-Śaṇkara, indicating the temple to be a Śaiva one, According to Buchanan, "the brick-work had fallen and was rebuilt by Rājā Mitrajit's grand-

1. Martin, *Eastern India*, I, p. 438.
2. *JASB*, 1872, pp. 256ff.
3. Martin, *Eastern India*, Vol. I, pp. 97ff.

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father, but has again decayed a great deal."[1] In his time itself, the temple had been badly damaged.

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT SINGHEŚVARASTHĀNA :–

The village Singheśvarasthāna situated at a distance of about 10 kms. from Madhepura railway station in the district of Madhepura is of considerable religious importance. The present temple of Śiva was constructed only two hundred years back by a merchant of Bhagalpur named Hari Charan Choudhary. The *liṅga* within the *grabhagṛha* is ancient one and the site is also commonly accepted as very ancient. According to the legend prevalent in the area, the Śiva-liṅga was installed by Rsi Śṛṇga who had performed the *putrayeṣṭhi yajña* for king Daśratha. The legend has induced a number of barren women to pay a daily visit to the temple.

The *Varāha Purāṇa* has a very interesting story with regard to the Śiva temple of Singheśvarsthāna. The story runs as follows :–

"Once upon a time Lord Śiva went to a forest called Slesa Atmaka and told Nandīśvara that he should not divulge to anybody where he had gone Lord Indra with Lord Brahmā and Lord Viṣṇu went to the mount Munjavana and asked Nandīśvara where Lord Śiva had gone. As Nandīśvara did not tell them of Lord Śiva's whereabouts, these three gods went to the Slesa Atmaka forest in search of him. Lord Śiva took the form of a deer. Recognising him, they ran to catch hold of him. Indra caught the front portion of the horn of the deer, Brahmā its middle portion and foot was caught by Viṣṇu. The horn broke into three pieces and the deer disappeared. Then they heard a voice from the heaven addressed to them to the effect that they would not be able to find Śiva and that they were to rest satisfied with the portion of the horn in their hands. Indra established the portion of the horn, which had fallen into his hand, in heaven. Brahmā established it at that very place. Both these parts came to be known as Kokaran. Viṣṇu established on earth what had fallen into his

1. *Ibid.* p., 74.

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hand, for the good of humanity, and this place came to be known as Singheśvarasthāna".[1]

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT BELWA

Belwa is situated about 9 kms. north-east of Gopalganj in the district of Gopalganj, A mound near the village when excavated in 1919 by Panday, yielded ruins of a large temple with smaller shrines attached to it. On the evidence of sculptures and other datable antiquities found from the excavation, this temple was assigned to late medieval period, but underneath it was discovered a much earlier temple which cannot be dated later than the 6th century A.D. This earlier temple consists of two shrines placed side by side, one dedicated to Viṣṇu and the other to Śiva. The antiquities found here include three bronze images, two of them representing Śiva-liṅgas. The earlier temple, according to Pandey was destroyed by the Chinese General, Waug-hiuentse, who ravaged the country in 647 A.D.[2]

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT BAIKATHPUR

The village of Baikathpur (Baikunthapur) is situated on the bank of the Ganges about 8 kms. east of Fatuha in the district of Patna, The mother of Rājā Mān Singh, Governor of Akbar, had died here and was cremated on the bank of Ganges near the village. Rājā Mān Singh is credited to have built the Śiva temple of the place besides other temples. Buchanan records that when he visited the place he had heard of a local tradition that as a result of a dream that king Jarāsandha's amulet was lying in the river, a liṅga with four faces was discovered which evcntually became the object of worship in the main temple.[3]

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT KUSHESHWARSTHAN

There is a Śiva temple at Kusheshwarsthan in the district of

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1. Chaudhary, P. C., *Temples and Legends of Bihar*, pp. 170-71.
2. *Annual Report, ASI, EC*, 1918-1 , pp. 46-47.
3. Buchanan, *Patna-Gaya*, I. pp. 75-76, *BODG, Patna*, p. 198.

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Darbhanga, *Kāmaliṅga* of Śiva is in the popular worship by the people.

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT BRAHMAPUR (BHOJPUR)

Situated in the district of Bhojpur at a distance of about 5 kms. from Raghunathpur railway station on the main line of Eastern Railway. The site is an ancient one and the *Śiva-liṅga* installed in the temple is famous by the name of Brahmaśvarnātha. On the occassion of Śivarātri a great fair is held every year.

THE GUPTA DHĀMA (ROHTAS)

Gupta Dhāms, deep in the Kaimur hills is Rohtas district, attracts thousands of devotees of Lord Śiva on the occasion of Mahā Śivarātri. The pilgrims have to trek about one kilometre through a narrow tunnel to reach the shrine. There is an interesting legend why Lord Śiva took his abode there.

According to a legend the demon Bhaṣmāsura wanted to subdue Lord Śiva from whom he had secured a boon giving him power to destroy anyone by touching him on the head. After obtaining the boon Bhaṣmāsura started chasing Lord Śiva forcing him to take shelter in a cave.

The demon pursued the Lord there too. Lord Viṣṇu then assumed the form of Mohinī, a temptress. Enamoured of her, Bhaṣmāsura approached Mohinī for dancing lessons. Mohinī agreed. When Bhaṣmāsura attained enough proficiency the two engaged in a dancing duet. Mohinī touched her head and Bhaṣmāsura followed suit loosing his life in the process.

Since then, the legend has it that the Gupta Dhāma has been a centre of Śiva's worship.

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT SULTANGANJ

Sultanganj is situated at a distance of 25 kms. from Bhagalpur. There is a rocky island in the middle of the Ganges, locally known as Jahangira. The site has a Śiva temple of Ajgaivīnātha also known as Gaibīnātha Mahādeva. The present temple may be assigned to the 18th century A,D., though it is not unlikely that an earlier Śiva temple

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existed on the island as will be seen from the rock cut sculptures carved on it.

The origin of the Ajgaivīnātha temple is also shrouded in mystery. According to one legend Lord Śiva was given his bow known as Ajgav at this place and so the god came to be known as Ajgaivīnātha.[1]

THE ŚIVA TEMPLES AS CHECHGAONGARH

Eight miles south-west of Katras on the banks of the river Damuda (or Damodar) were said to have been very extensive ruins of some sixteen temples, representing a large religious establishment which were described by Beglar in his report for 1872-73,[2] The ruins covered an area 800 metres in length and 400 metres in width, and were locally known as Chechgaongarh, now in the district of Dhanbad. The largest of the temples was obviously that of Śiva as seen from a Liṅga in its womb house [3] From the ruins of smaller temples on all its four sides close by, it is obvious that it was the main temple surrounded by a number of subsidiary shrines. The main temple consisted of a sanctum, a vestibule, a large pillared hall and a portico in front. Numerous carvings and sculptures were seen by Beglar amongst these ruins, which struck him as being of high workmanship, comparable with the fine carvings, of Khajuraho and Udayapur in Madhya Pradesh. The carvings, according to him, included representations of elephants, figures of Mahiṣamardinī Durgā, Liṅgas, Arghas, and some Jaina and Buddhist deities. One of the figures he took as representing the Kalki incarnation of Viṣṇu. He also draws comparison between the spires (*śikharas*) of the temples of Khajuraho and those of the temples at Chechgaongarh, though the latter were mostly dilapidated.[4]

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1. Roy Choudhury, P. C., *Temples and Legends of Bihar*, p. 40.
2. *ASR*, VIII, pp. 157-60.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 158-59.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

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A short distance away from this group of temples, towards east and west, along both the banks of the river, Beglar further noticed ruins of other temples with numerous Liṅgas, Arghas, etc,, lying about, suggesting their Śaivite affiliation.[1] According to local tradition, all the ruins of Chechgaongarh are attributed to one Rājā Maheśvara, who is said to have belonged to the community of the Ghatwala, who still inhabit the area about Katras.[2]

An inscription mentioning the ancient name 'Chichitagara' has also been found from this place. Beglar noticed an old Nāgarī inscription in two lines, on a ledge or rock, along the west bank of a rivulet, close to the east of the largest temple described above. The first line he reads as 'Chichitagara', which, according to him, referred to modern Chechgaongarh, while the second line was read as 'Srayaki Rachhabanaidra', suggesting clearly that there were Jaina or Śrāvaki temple here.[3] Beglar further states, 'on the flat rock alone are cut nemerous Arghas, Liṅgams, Charṣṇas and figures male, female, etc., all rather rudely.'[4]

The *Bengal List*[5] and the District Gazetteer[6] apparently drew their information from the report of Beglar. Bloch; however, visited the area in 1903, but he dismisses rather summarily by saying that the place Chechgaongarh and its ruins as mentioned in the Bengal List are 'altogether fictitious' for he found that, 'nobody knew anything there of a place of this name.'[7] He makes no mention of Beglar and of his detailed report while saying so. The area does not seem to have been explored later but in view of detailed report furnished by Beglar, the place deserves to be fully explored and information verified.

1. *Ibid*, p. 159.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 159.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 159.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Bengal List*, p. 552.
6. *BOC Manbhum*, p. 275.
7. *Annual Report, ASI, BC*, 1903, p. 14.

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THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT MAJHGAON

The Tāṅgīnātha hill, a small hillock named as such on account of the temple of Tāṅgīnātha upon it, is about 28 kms. west of Chainpore police station under Gumla sub-division in the district of Ranchi. As a matter of fact, the entire area around the hillock is infested with thick vegetation. The Tāṅgīnātha temple was first noticed by Chunnilal Ray in the year 1915.[1]

There are two old temples (including the Tāṅgīnātha temple) over the hillock. The temple (other than the Tāṅgīnātha temple) is built of stone (dry ashlar masonry) and contains a gigantic iron trident (*triśūla*), which is the most noteworthy antiquity of the place. The temple consists of a shrine-chamber (*garbhagṛha*) preceded by a pillared hall, though it is considerably ruined. The dimension of the temple are too modest to be in keeping with the size of the huge trident. The inner court of the stone temple i. e. shrine chamber) measures only 2·10 metres. It also consists of a small antechamber in front, measuring 1 17 metres by 61 cms.

The outer gateway has an instep 20 cms. high and measures about it 1·22 metres by 56 cms.. while the inner gateway has no instop and it is about 1 35 metres high. The roof, except of the two gateways and a passage in between, has collapsed and the walls of the inner portion (the shrine chamber of the temple proper) stand to a height of 2 metres only. There had evidently been some superstructure on the top of the gateways and the passages but that also have come down.

The gateways are composed of rectangular pillars of reddish brown sandstone supporting large slabs of the same material. The walls are built of blocks of sandstone which also were probably originally of the same hue as the gateways but have now been discolcured with age. There are carvings of wreaths, leaves, human figures, small buildings with numerous windows and arches, on the gateways as well

1. *JBORS*, I, pt. 1, pp. 117-24.

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as on the other faces of the walls, but those on the latter have mostly become very indistinct. In the lower portion of each of the two pillars of the outer gateway has been carved within a niche a female figure 40 cms. high, with one armed belt across the chest and holding something like a small jar in her hand. The slab forming the roof of the gateway has also been carved, on its outer face, with wreaths corresponding to those on the pillars, the lower one, which corresponds to the inner wreath of the pillars has in the middle a small figure of Gaṇeśa.

The carvings on the inner gateway are on an average 80 cms. high and represent divine figures with four hands. They wear garlands like *yajñopavīta*, the garland of the one on the left hand side is composed of nine human heads (he may obviously be identified with Bhairava). There are in the inner court (shrine chamber) two Liṅgas of Śiva, evidently placed there long after the temple was constructed. These are surrounded by broken portions of pedestals of columns.[1]

The figures of Gaṇeśa and Nine Planets (Navagrahas) are found over the centre of the door-jambs and lintel respectively.[2] Besides a stray figure of the Gaja-Vyāla, a popular motif in Orissan art, also appears to have been a part of the temple.[3] The site also yielded a number of loose sculptures representing Viṣṇu, Harihara, Sūrya, Umā-Maheśwara, Mahiṣamardinī Durgā, etc. datable between the 6th and 11th centuries A.D.[4] The interior of the porch might have undergone repairs (in the forms of additions and alterations) in the later period, which is evident from crudely carved pillars, relieved with human figures, bearing tribal features in their over all appearances,[5]

The general appearance of the temple, as it might have looked when intact, must be left to conjecture. Judging from the portion that

1. *JBORS*, Vol. I, pt. 1, pp. 118-19.
2. Gupta, K. P., *Early Temples of Chotanagpur Area, District Ranchi, Bihar (JBPP*, Vol. II, 1978, pp. 215-219).
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*

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is still standing, it appears to have been similar to the temples at Para in the Manbhum district,[1] a humbler specimen of the same style in which the great temple at Bhubaneshwar is built. Ruined temples of very small dimensions in the same style still exist at Bero, 34 kms. west of Ranchi on the road to Gumla and at Biru, 130 kms. south of Ranchi in Rochedege P.S.[2]

There is also a comparatively late brick temple over the hillock constructed by the ancestor of Rājā of Majhgaon some time in the 19th century A.D. The temple was dedicated to the worship of Lord Tāṅgīnātha, after whom the hillock is known as the Tāṅgīnātha Pahar. A few old sculptures from the earlier stone temple seem to have been used in its construction.

The most interesting and curious object is the iron trident (*triśūla*), quite unusually large in size as compared with the size of the ancient temple. The *triśūla* is broken, but the broken blades of its three prongs were found lying at the site. Its main rod is octagonal, 28 cms. in perimeter, and more than 2 metres of it is said to have been planted underground. The total height of the *triśūla* with its blade is estimated to be about 5·20 metres or more. There are indications that the pieces were welded together. Chunnilal Ray does not quote any local tradition with regard to its history and antiquity nor does he express any view about its probable age except that he was told that it stood there for ages.

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT BAMNI :—

Bamni is a village in the Ranchi district. Near the village are the remains of a stone temple with about a dozen large grooved stone pedestals of the *liṅgas* kept arranged around the temple courtyard. They are locally attributed to the Asuras. There is a tank near the temple which is partly silted up.[3]

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1. *List of the Ancient Monuments in the Chotanagpur Division*, pp, 24-25.
2. *JBORS*, Vol. I, pt. 1, p. 119. No. details of the images at Bero and Biru are available.
3. *JBORS*, Vol. I, p. 246.

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THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT KHEKPARTA :—

Khekparta near Lohardaga in the district of Ranchi is remarkable for a group of eight temples, including the principal one, dedicated to the worship of Aṣṭa-Śambhus. In the medieval period, there developed a tradition of worshipping eight Śiva-liṅgas, installed in eight shrines, which came to be known as the worship of Aṣṭa-Śambhus. As a result, a group of eight temples were constructed at several places with their traditional number of eight Śiva.liṅgas enshrined in them. At Bhubaneshwar in Orissa, where the Śiva temples increased to an enormous number of five hundred or even more, the Śaiva shrines were ultimately assigned to eight *avatāras*, each having a presiding Liṅga with a number of satellites.[1] At Benisagar in the district of Singhbhum, situated at a distance of 85 kms. from Chaibasa, where the remains of the temples and sculptures exist, the number of Śiva liṅgas enshrined in the temples appears to have been eight.[2] The traditional number of eight Śiva liṅgas (Aṣṭa-Śambhus), however, still exist in eight shrines dedicated to them at Khakparta in the Ranchi district.[3] At this place, the main temple stands on an isolated rock at the top of a hill, but down below at the foot of the hill, seven more miniature structures, each with a Śiva liṅga in the womb house, were also constructed to complete the traditional number of eight, thus representing a place of considerable significance as being the place of worship of Aṣṭa Śambhus.[4] The period also witnessed the construction of a few temples in the Orissan style of temple architecture in the border districts of Singhbhum, Manbhum and Ranchi.[5] The principal temple at Khekparta may be

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1. Gangoly, M. M., *Orissa and Her Remains*, p, 273.
2. *JBRS*, XLII, p. 3.
3. Diwakar, R. R., *op cit.*, p. 333; *JBRS*, XLII, p. 3. At Anjan in the Gumla Sub-division of the Ranchi district are also remains of shrines dedicated to the worship of Aṣṭa-Śambhus.
4. Diwakar, R. R., *op cit.*, p. 366, pl. XV. 37; Sinha, B. P., *Comprehensive History of Bihar*, II, p. 525; *JBRS*, XLII, p. 3.
5. Diwakar, *op, cit.*, p. 366.

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reckoned as one of the best preserved examples of the Orissan style, which is built entirely of stone dressed into regular courses and which has also a curvilinear *śikhara*, as noticed in the Orissan temples. Further details are, however, lacking in respect of the temples at Khekparta. The temples at Khekparta are thus significant, firstly, on account of the temples having been dedicated to the worship of Aṣṭa-śambhus, and, secondly, for bearing witness to the temples having been constructed in the Orissan style of temple architecture in the state of Bihar.

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT BENISAGAR :--

A place of considerable importance from the point of view of Śiva worship seems to have been Benisagar, a small village on the border of Bihar and Orissa, in the district of Singhbhum, situated about 85 kms from Chaibasa. The place has been so named after a large tank nearby called as Benisagar, said to have been excavated by one Benu Raja. Colonel Tickell[1] and Beglar[2] were the first to have left any record about the archaeological remains of the place, which consist mainly of several low mounds, structural parts of brick and stone temples, śiva-liṅgas and stone sculptures.[3] The existing archaeological remains lead to suggest that the area around the tank at Benisagar possessed several temples of Śiva, of which none has survived to the present day. The exact number of such temples cannot be ascertained, but the collection of eight Śiva-liṅgas in the corner of the modern Devasthāna may rather indicate that originally there were eight temples dedicated to the worship of Śiva, in which each of the śiva-liṅgas was the presiding deity. Other stone images may have either formed the integral parts of the temple structures or may have been enshrined in the subsidiary shrines associated with the Śiva temples. It is not improbable that Benisagar may have been a place of worship of Aṣṭa-Śambhus, with eight temples for Śiva, though the number of śambhus may have increased in later times. It may

1. *BDG, Singhbhum*, pp. 207-09.
2. *ASR*, XIII pp. 69-71.
3. *JBRS*, XLII, pt, 1 pp. 1 ff.

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be noted that at Bhubaneshwar in Orissa, the number of Śiva temples increased to an enormous number of five hundred or more, though the shrines were ultimately assigned to eight *avatāras*, each having a presiding Liṅgam with a number of satellites.[1]

Since none of the temples are in existance at Benisagar, it is difficult to determine the type of the temple architecture that may have grown there. However, according to K. C. Panigrahi,[2] "as Khitching is in close neighbourhood of Benisagar, it is reasonable to hold that both followed the same type of temple architecture, if the monuments of both the places were created in the same age." The Khitching temples have followed the *rekhā* type widely prevalent in Orissa, but have also some peculiarities of their own. One outstanding peculiarity is the absence of *mukhśālā* in them,[3] which they share with the temples of the Bankura district. Since the foundations of the Benisagar temples do not reveal the existance of *mukhaśālās* in them, it is most probable that they followed more or less the temple style of Khitching.[4]

As to the age of the temple that once stood at Benisagar, no inference, however, can be drawn from their existing foundations. "But since the detached sculptures gathered together in the Devasthāna formed the integral parts of the temple structures," remarks Panigrahi,[5] "the age of these sculptures must also be taken to be the age of the temples." And on the basis of the stylistic study of the sculptures from Benisagar, he has dated some of the temple in the 8th or 9th century A. D. and the others in the 10th or 11th century A. D[6]

THE ŚIVA TEMPLE AT DEOGHAR :—

In addition to these there are a number of places in different parts of Bihar which are hallowed as centres of Śiva's worship. The

1. *JBRS*, XLII, pt. I, p. 3
2. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *JBORS*, XIII, p. 132.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
6. *Ibid.*

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places, as attested by the Paurāṇic and other literary references, appear to be considerably ancient; but the temple of Śiva that exist at these places are somewhat of recent date, hardly going back to two or three hundred years. But as the references to these places are enshrined in the Purāṇas, it is quite evident that in the ancient period they were held sacred and served as centres of Śiva's worship.

One such place is Deogher in the district of Santhal Parganas, also called Baidyanātha-dhāma which was and still is an important centre of Śiva's worship. Legends relating to the antiquity and sacredness of Śiva's worship at the place are noticed in the *Śiva Purāṇa* and the *Padma Purāṇa*. The *Śiva Purāṇa* is roughly dated in the Gupta period. Deoghar may, therefore, have been sacred from a time before that of the imperial Guptas.

Baidyanāth-dhāma or Deoghar is well-known to be a Śaiva *tīrtha*. The *Śiva Purāṇa*[1] includes Vaidyanāth-liṅga in Chitabhumi as one of the twelve *jyotirliṅgas*. De and Kane have identified Chitabhumi with modern Baidyanātha-dhāma-Deoghar.[2] The deity, however, is not recognised as one of the twelve *jyotirliṅgas* either by Lakṣmi-dhara or Vallalsena or in the Barhaspatya *Arthāśāstra*. It might be contended that Vaidyanātha in Deoghar did not gain an all India recognition by the twelfth century A. D. But there is no doubt about the antiquity of Baidyanātha-dhāma as a sacred *tīrtha*. Both the *Matsya* and the *Padma*[3] *Purāṇas* mention it as a fit place of funeral obsequies. A perusal of the 108 names of the Devī in the *Matsya*, *Padma* and *Devī-Bhāgavata Purāṇas* show that Baidyanāth-dhāma was sacred to the Śāktas as being the seat of Aroga, one of the names of Bhagavatī.[4] This tradition is recognised not only in the *Kubjikā* and *Prāṇatoṣanī Tantras* but also by Mitra Mishra.[5] The *Pīthanirṇaya* and

1. *Śiva Purāṇa*, 38.19.
2. De, *Geog Dict.* p. 50; nos. IV. 743.
3. *Matsya Purāna*, 22.24 reads but *Padma Sṛṣti-Kh* XI. 15 has the same passage except the word 'Sarva' instead of parva in Matsya.
4. *Matsya Purāṇa*, 13.41 *Padma Purāṇa Sṛṣti-Kh* 195 *Devī Bhāg.* 7.30.71.
5. *JASB*, XIV. 20, *Tirthaprakasa*, p. 132 quoting *Matsya Purāṇa*

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Śivacharita record that the heart of the Devī fell at this place.[1] The *Devī-Bhāgvvata* also informs us that she was worshipped at Vagalāsthāna in Vaidyanātha.[2] Vrindāvanadāsa in the *Chaitanya Bhāgavata* written in the first half of the sixteenth century A. D., says that Nityānanda proceeded from Vakreshwar in the Birbhum district to Baidyanātha[3] and then went to Gaya. This shows that Baidyanātha-dhāma was a sacred *tīrtha* at the beginning of the sixteenth century A. D. and it lay on the route from Bengal to Gaya.

According to the Purāṇic legend, as narrated in the *Śiva Purāṇa*, Rāvaṇa, the demon king of Laṅka and a great devotee of Śiva, desired the lord to settle in his kingdom Laṅka or Ceylon. Śiva suggested that only one of his *Jyotirlingas*[4] will be equally effective and offered him one to carry to his own kingdom but on the express condition that, while in transit from the Himalayas to Laṅka, his emblem should not be kept anywhere on the ground, otherwise it will get fixed at the place for ever. Gods so conspired that Varuṇa entered in the stomach of Rāvaṇa, and he had to get down on earth to ease himself. Viṣṇu in the garb of an old decrepit Brahmin made his appearance before Rāvana. Rāvana not realising the conspiracy asked the Brahmin, who was no other than Viṣṇu himself, to hold the *liṅga* of Śiva in his hand till he returns after relieving himself. But Viṣṇu after some time

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1 *JASB*, XIV 35.40.
2. *Devī Bhāg*, 7.38.14.
3. Chaitanya Bhāgavata 1.6.
4. Śiva Purana mentions twelve Jyotirlingas of Śiva :
Saurāṣṭre Somnāthaṃ cha Śrīśailam Mallikārjunaṃ
Ujjayinyāṃ Mahākalamoṅkāraṃ parameśvaraṃ II
Kedāraṃ himvatpṛṣṭhe dakṣinyāṃ Bhīmaśaṅkraṃ I
Vārāṇāsyāṃ cha Viśveśaṃ, Trayambakaṃ Gotami taṭe II
Vaidyanātham chitā-bhūmah Nāgeśaṃ Dārukāvane I
Setubandhe cha Rāmeśaṃ Ghuśmeśaṃ cha Śivālaye II
Dvād Śaitāni nāmāni prātarūthāya vaḥ pathet I
Saptajanmakṛtaṃ pāpaṃ smaraṇena vinaśyati II

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placed the *Jyotirliṅga* of Śiva on the ground and disappeared. Howsoever Rāvaṇa tried his strength to uproot the *liṅga*, it got stuck to the ground. Ultimately, out of anger, the king of Laṅkā beat it repeatedly with the result that a portion of the *liṅga* got damaged which can still be seen. Thereafter realising his mistake he worshipped the Lord from the water brought from the source of Ganga and later on created a well nearby hitting the earth with his arrow in which got deposited the water of all the sacred rivers.

The place where the Śiva-liṅga was put on the earth is known as Deoghar. The Śiva-Liṅga at Deoghar is known as Baidyanātha. According to a legend in the *Padma Purāṇa*,[1] a Brahmin in the garb of Viṣṇu, after taking the Śiva-liṅga from Rāvaṇa, consecrated it in due form with water from a neighbouring tank. There was a Bhil present nearby who was instructed as to what should be done. The Bhil informed Rāvaṇa about the disappearance of the Brahmin. Ravaṇa is supposed to have excavated a well with an arrow and got into it the waters of all the sacred pools of the earth. The *liṅga* of Śiva, after the death of Rāvaṇa, used to be worshipped by a hunter named Baiju and as such the god's emblem came to be known after Baiju as Baidyanātha.[2]

According to another legend when Satī, the consort of Śiva and daughter of Dakṣa, got annoyed because of the discourtesy shown towards her husband by Dakṣa by not inviting him to a *yajña*, she committed suicide. Lord Śiva, out of anger, stuck the corpse of his wife on the point of his *triśūla* and roamed about in a frenzy of fury. Lest Śiva's anger and frantic movements destroy the world, Viṣṇu cut the dead body of Sati with his *chakra* into fifty-two pieces which fell in different parts of India and came to be known as *Mahāpīṭhasthānas* of Satī.[3] According to the legend, the heart of Satī fell at Deoghar.[4]

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1. Roy Choudhary, P. C., *Temples and Legends of Bihar*, pp. 159 ff.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*

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It is, however, surprising that there is no shrine at the other fifty-one places to commemorate this occurrence.

The great temple of Baidyanātha is situated within a walled enclosure with irregular quadrilateral shape and is surrounded inside the enclosure by a number of subsidiary shrines or structures. The courtyard or enclosure is roughly 62 metres by 58 metres paved with Chunar sandstone. The main entrance is on the north side through a massive gateway with side pillars, while on the east is another arched gateway with a Naubat-khana (the room for musicians). On the west is a small doorway leading to a bylane. Along the eastern wall is a double storeyed building, now used by the temple musicians.

The temple of Baidyanātha faces towards the east. It is a plain stone structure with a pyramidal tower which rises from a square base to a height of 18.23 metres from the ground. It consists of a sanctum, 4.62 metres by 4.57 metres with a porch 11 metres by 3.57 metres and with another similar porch added to it in the front, facing towards the east. The other three sides of the sanctum have pillared verandahs, the north verandah is provided with a masonry *vat* to receive the ablutions offered to the *liṅga* in the shrine. The *śikhra* over the sanctum is 18.23 metres high, its surface being cut into a check pattern by plain perpendicular and horizontal mouldings. The entire structure is built of stone. A few sculptural carvings can be noticed in the entire building except for the sacred bull and similar small images placed in the second or outer porch. Inside the shrine is the sacred *liṅga*.

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CHAPTER V
ŚIVA IN SCULPTURES

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The third member of the Brahmanical triad Śiva appears to have been worshipped both in the Liṅga and the human forms from a fairly early period. He has been widely represented in the art of Bihar. Images of the god, not only in considerable number, but representing him also in varieties of forms, have been obtained from different parts of the state. They attest not only to the popularity of the god in the state; but also indicate the rise of different Śaiva sub-sects.

The phallic emblem of the god in association with the ring-stone (*yonī*-pedestal) appears to have been worshipped as early as the 3rd millenium B. C. when a highly rich civilization flourished in the Indus Valley. Of course, no Śiva-liṅga of comparable date have been found in Bihar. However, Śiva-liṅgas of somewhat later period have been obtained from different parts of the state. Some of the *Liṅgas* are plain and simple cylindrical shafts, whereas others are *mukha-liṅgas* having one (*eka-mukha*) of four faces (*chatur-mukha*), supposedly of Śiva, superimposed on the sides of the *liṅgas*. Śiva's worship in the *liṅga* form can be traced back at least to the 1st century B.C./1st century A. D. during the Kushan perind. The fact is clearly borne out by the discovery of the Śiva-liṅgas belonging to the Kushan period from the excavations at Rājagṛha. It is evident from the finds that the cult of *liṅga* worship was prevalent during the early centuries of the Christian era. Śiva-liṅgas, both plain and *mukha-liṅga*, of the Gupta period have been found from Rājagṛha, Vaiśālī, Colgong,

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Gaya and other parts of Bihar. Sometimes the Śiva-liṅgas are found adorned with the flowerly designs. A stucco Śiva-liṅga from the Maniyāra Maṭha at Rājagṛha is adorned with a garland of flowers.[1] The Śiva-liṅga from Gaya has the human face of Śiva carved boldly on one side with the Śiva head having the hair tied up into a *jaṭā*.[2] The mark of the third eye is shown perpendicularly on the forehead. He has a beaded necklace around the neck and the *kuṇḍalas* hanging from the ear-lobes. Another Śiva-liṅga of the Gupta period, which bears the face of Śiva on one side only, is equally interesting. It has been discovered at Colgong in the district of Bhagalpur and is presently preserved in the Patna Museum.[3] A highly charming śiva-liṅga from Kṛṣṇagarh, Sultanganj, in the district of Bhagalpur has also the human bust of the god on its one side. The god has a high *jaṭā-mukuṭa* over his head and he puts on circular *kuṇḍalas* and a necklace. His third eye has been prominently shown. The Chaturmukha-liṅga found from Vaiśālī and from other parts of Bihar (the findspot being not exactly known) show the four human faces of Śiva superimposed on the four sides of the cylindrical shafts.[4] The Chaturmukha-liṅga from the village Kaman Chapra (Vaiśālī)[5] has the human faces much blurred but the features are quite distinct suggestive of the faces being adorned with the *jaṭāmukuṭas*, beaded necklaces and ear ornaments. Carved out of black basalt, the sculpture locally known as Chaturmukhī-Mahādeva, belongs stylistically to the Gupta period. A gold coin of Chandragupta II Vikramaditya and a inscription found in its vicinity may point to the date of the sculpture.

Mention may also be made of a rare and charming Śiva-liṅga from

1. Ghosh, A. *Rajgir*, p. 20.
2. Sinha, C. P., *Early Sculpture of Bihar*, p. 103, fig. 50.
3. PM Arch. No. 100.
4. Mishra and Roy, *A Guide to Vaiśālī and the Vaiśālī Museum*, p. 43, pl VIII.
5. *Ibid*, p. 36.

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from Sultanganj rock-hill in the district of Bhagalpur.[1] It is about 80 cms. high, encircled by eighteen thick rings or coils. The special feature of this *liṅga* is that it has eight figures carved around it. The *liṅga* is not associated with any *yonī* pedestal. The entire *liṅga* and the figures carved on it are badly mutilated. But what remains of the sculpture shows the carving of a high order. No Śiva-liṅga of this type has been reported so far. Even when it is in an almost blurred condition, it is of great interest for the students of Indian art. There is full harmony in the formation of the *liṅga* proper, the coils and the accessory figures. The sculptor has fully succeeded in displaying his high skill. Stylistically, the *liṅga* may be placed in the post-Gupta period.

Śiva-liṅgas, plain cylindrical and *mukha-liṅgas*, belonging to the Pāla period have also been found from different parts of Bihar. A Chaturmukhī-liṅga of Śiva was installed at Bodhgaya in the 26th regnal year of the Pāla ruler Dharmapāla.[2] As early as 1872, Beglar had noticed to the north of the village Balgudar, a few miles to the north of Lakhisarai in the district of Monghyr, a large sized four-faced *liṅga*, besides several other statues and fragments, suggesting the existence of a Śiva temple closeby.[3] Very recently a large sized Śiva-liṅga has been discovered from Chaukī, a comparatively insignificant place, situated in the close vicinity of Rajaona.[4] Rajaona is well known to be a village of archaeological importance from where several fragments of stone sculptures depicting the scene of Arjuna's Penance have been brought to light.[5] The colossal Śiva-liṅga from Chaukī is 56 cms. in height from the *Pīṭhikā* or *arghya* and the liṅga

1. Choudhary, A. K., *Sultanganj-ki-Sanskritī*, fig. no. 2.
   Choudhary, A. K., *A Rare Śiva-liṅga at Sultanganj in JBRS*, Vol. LVIII, 1972. pp. 158 ff. and plates.
2. French, J. C., *The Art of the Pāla Empire*, p. 6.
3. *ASR*, VIII, p. 117.
4. *JBPP*. I, 1977, p. 206, pl. XXIX.
5. *ASIAR*, 1911-12.

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itself in 80 cms. in circumference on the lower portion. These are not only the sole examples of the Śiva-liṅgas from Bihar belonging to the Pāla period, rather as already referred to above Siva-liṅgas in black basalt of the period, artistically executed, have found dotted throughout the state. There are numerous Śiva-lingas of the Pāla period in the temples of Patna itself. Phallic emblems of Śiva belonging to the Pāla period have been found represented at least by two bronzes from Belwa in the district of Saran, one of the representations being plain cylindrical *liṅga*[1] and the other of the Chaturmukhī type,[2] both having been placed on a high double tiered drum, containing figure of a kneeling devotee in *añjali-mudrā*, a couchant bull, the *vāhana* of Śiva, and a trident (*triśūla*), the special emblem of the god, in relief on them. The Chaturmuhī liṅga, as usual with the stone *liṅgas*, exhibits four human heads of Śiva, superimposed on the four sides of the *liṅga*, each characterised by knotted locks of hair over the head and mark of the third eye vertically over the foreheads.[3] The plain cylindrical *liṅga* shows some additional feature and it is that a four-armed figure of Gaṇeśa has been shown seated in an easy posture on a miniature lotus emerging from the side of the drum itself.[4]

Some of the Śiva-liṅgas are quite curious as well as highly interesting not only from the iconographic point of view; but also from the point of religion. J. N. Banerjee has illustrated a Pañchāyatana Śiva-liṅga originally from some part of Bihar, the exact findspot being not mentioned.[5] It is presently displayed in the Indian Museum at Calcutta. There is yet another Śiva-liṅga of the Pañchāyatana type which was found fixed in a small shrine on the bank of the Ganges in the Adalatghat of Patna.[6] The Śiva-linga, measuring 65 cms. in

1. Gupta, P. L., *PMCA*, p. 162 (PM. Arch. No. 2768).
2. *Ibid.*, p. 162 (PM. Arch. No. 2767).
3. *Ibid.*, p. 162 (PM. Arch. No. 2767).
4. *Ibid.*, p. 162 (PM. Arch. No. 2768).
5. Banerjee., J. N., *DHI*, p. 545, pl. XLVI.
6. *JBRS*, LV, 1969, pp. 122 ff. and plate.

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height and 1.22 metres in circumference, has been made out of black basalt, and stylistically it can be dated during the Pāla period in the 10th-11th century A.D. It has been chamfered into four sides, each of them presenting an appearance of a stela, while its crown providing almost a circular space is formed like the *Yonī*-pedestal in the centre of which is an extremely mutilated figure of a bull, Śiva's *Vṛṣabha*. On the north side of the Śaiva emblem can be seen the figure of four-armed Gaṇapati dancing on a *pañcharatha* pedestal. With his right leg planted on the pedestal and the left one slightly raised as if in the act of dancing, he has very impressively been carved. His front right hand in the *daṇḍa-hasta* pose is drawn across his belly, while he has a pot of sweet balls in his front left hand to which the proboscis of the curved trunk has been applied. In his back right hand. he is holding a radish (*mūlaka*), while the object held in his back left hand is not clear. On the west side is the figure of Viṣṇu, standing and four armed, carrying his usual attributes *śankha*, *chakra*, *padma* and *gadā*. On the south side is the figure of a two-armed goddess, carrying a water vessel (*kamaṇḍalu*) by her right hand and a rosary (*akṣa-sūtra*) in her left hand. Her stiff erect posture, arrangement of her coiffure into a *jaṭā* and the objects in her two hands would identify the goddess as Pārvatī. On the east side is the figure of Sūrya, standing and holding full blossomed lotus flowers in his two upraised hands. He is also accompanied by his two favourite attendants, Daṇḍa holding a staff and Piṅgala shown pot-bellied. Thus, the Pañchāyatana Śiva-liṅga with the figure of a bull at the top shows the four cult divinities on the four sides of the central Śaiva emblem. There is yet another example of a Pañchāyatana type of Śiva-liṅga in a lane (Mata Khudi Lane) in Mahalla Mahendru at Patna.

Another highly interesting Śiva-liṅga of approximately the same period was found installed in the Dudheśvaranātha temple in Rani-ghat at Patna.[1] The Śiva liṅga, measuring 50 cms. in height above the pedestal, has its upper portion cylindrical in shape with one

1. *JBPP*, Vol. I, pp. 165-70, pls. XIV-XIX.

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thousand miniature Śiva-liṅgas having been carved all round it, making the *liṅga* a Sahasraliṅga. The lower portion of the *liṅga* is chamfered into four sides, each face being separated by cylindrical pilasters supporting semi-circular canopies above forming dome-shaped arches, under which four different deities have been shown. On the north side of the *liṅga* is the figure of the four-armed Gaṇapati standing erect. He is carrying an *aṅkuśa* and a radish in his left hands, while he has a bowl full of *modakas* (sweet balls) in his front right hand, the object in his back right hand being not clear. On the west side is the figure of Sūrya, holding fully blossomed lotus flowers in his two upraised hands and accompanied by his attendants Daṇḍa and Piṅgala. On the south side is the figure of Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning, fine arts and music, represented as playing on her favourite *vīnā* with her two hands, the tastefully displayed ornaments and the graceful bend in her right leg being shown very attractively. On the east side of the *liṅga* is the figure of the four-faced pot-bellied Brahmā, the first member of the orthodox Brahmanical triad. He carries a rosary in his back left hand, a water vessel in the front left hand and a staff in the back right hand, while the front right hand is broken. He is clean shaven, but his hair on the head has been fastened just like an anchorite. The top portion of the *liṅga* represents the figure of Śiva himself dancing on his favourite bull. No parallel of such a *liṅga* has yet been noticed elsewhere. What is also of interest is that the shrine in which the Śiva-liṅga is enshrined contains three more Śiva-liṅgas, one of them being a Mukha-liṅga. All the four *liṅgas* are of the Pāla period.

Not only in the form of the *liṅgas*, the human representations of Śiva have also been found in large numbers from different parts of the state. A sandstons sculpture form the stone temple at Nalanda, dated in the post-Gupta period, represents Śiva two-armed and standing[1]. He has a trident in his left hand, whereas his right hand is held by the side of the body, quite low, in the act of *varada-mudrā*.

1. *JUPHS*, XXIII, p. 204.

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Śiva has matted locks of hair. The mark of the third eye on the forehead, a small drapery round the waist secured by a waist-girdle and a beaded necklace are all characteristic of the Gupta period. The handle of the trident is sufficiantly long which is kept vertically on the ground on a some what raised platform. There is a halo behind the head. A squatting male figure in the *añjali-mudrā* on the right and a standing female figure holding a garland on the left are represented. Similar representations appear on certain of the tribal coins of the earlier period from which the Gupta figure appears to have been developed.

There is a splendid piece of stone sculpture presently housed in the Patna Museum, which, rendered in the form of a *Chaitya* arch with a circular space inside, contains the bust of Śiva.[1] Iconographically developed, the figure is shown with an *amṛta-ghaṭa* (flask of nectar) in the left hand, while the right hand is raised in the attitude of exposition. The mark of the third eye on the forehead is clearly visible. He has also snakes with expanded hoods on his right shoulder. He puts on an *ekāvalī* and on ornamented *yajñopavīta*. The body is bare with a *chādar* crossing in front and passing over the left shoulder.

Stone heads from Muṇḍeśvarī in the Rohtas district and other parts of Bihar may be identified as those of Śiva. The stone head from Muṇḍeśvarī has matted locks of hair over the head,[2] whereas the other stone head has some added features like the mark of third eye over the forehead, beaded necklace around the neck and *kuṇḍalas* hanging from the ear-lobes. The second head of Śiva from Chausa in the Bhojpur district is placed within a niche in the form of a *Chaitya* arch decorated with canopy and desings. It is now preserved in the Patna Museum.[3]

There is highly attractive image of Śiva (Fig. 3) from Utren-Pali near Koñch in the district of Gaya presently preserved in the Gaya

1. Banerji, R. D., *EISMS*, pl. XC.
2. *Śrī Rāmlochan Śaran Jayanti Smārak Grantha*, plate facing page 469.
3. PM. Arch. No. 10758.

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Museum, Gaya. Śiva has been shown standing on a single petalled lotus flower with his left hand placed on the thigh (*kaṭyāvalambita*) and the right one raised up in the *abhya mudrā* with a rosary in it. His hair is tied into *jaṭā* and he puts on ear ornaments, necklace and armlets. To his left has been exhibited a *triśūla* with a sufficiently long handle. He is accompanied by four devotees (or disciples), two on each side. On stylistic consideration, the image may be dated in circa 7th-8th century A. D.

There is also a highly interesting and unique image of Śiva-Ekapāda (Fig. 4) from Pali near Konch, now housed in the Gaya Museum, Gaya. The deity is ithyphallus and four armed. The sculpture executed in the form of a stela is damaged at the top and so also the face of the god is mutilated. His back right hand is also damaged. He appears to be holding a *triśūla* in his back right hand and he is stretching his front right hand in the *varada mudrā*. The object held in his two left hands are too blurred to make out anything. As in the preceding example, in this case as well, the deity is accompanied by four devotees (or disciples). The sculpture may also be dated on stylistic ground, in circa 8th century A. D.

UMĀ-MAHEŚVARA :—

The images of Umā-Maheśvara form a distinct class of the Umāliṅganamūrti of Śiva which do not seem to have association with any particular mythology. In such images, Umā (or Pārvatī), seated on the left thigh of Śiva, is shown in close embrace of each other. Śiva has four arms (sometimes only two) and is elaborately dressed and ornamented and seated on a high *āsana*. His right leg rests on *vāhana*, the bull. The upper hand to the right holds some object, while the other rests playfully on the chin of the goddess. His lower hand on the opposite side passes round the body of the goddess and supports her left breast. The upper one above it grasps a trident entwined by a cobra. The right hand of the goddess passes round his neck, while the left one is placed on the right knee (or in some cases she holds a mirror). Her vehicle, the lion is represented there

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on whose back her right leg rests. According to N. K. Bhattasali, 'of all Śaiva images, this variety is most commonly met with in Bengal.'[1] The remark holds good in case of Bihar as well. It may, however, be noted that the Tantric worshippers of Tripurasundarī (i. e. Umā or Pārvatī) are required to meditate on the Devī as seated on the lap of Śiva in the *mahāpadmavana*,[2] and images representing the goddess in the lap of Śiva were used by them as aids for the correct performance of the *dhyānayoga*.[3]

There is a remarkable concave plaque of pure gold in the collection of P. K. Jalan of Patna City.[4] The plaque has two figures one male and the other female embossed side by side upon it, which K. P. Jayaswal has identified with two cult deities, Śiva and Pārvatī. Śiva has a crescent like band below the *jaṭā knot*. He has been rendered embracing and touching the bosom of the female figure by his left hand. According to Jayaswal,[5] the gold p'aque ought to be dated in the Mauryan period. Justifiable doubts have, however, been expressed by competent authorities with regard to the genuineness of the metal plaque.[6]

From Muṇḍeśvarī comes the figure of Umā-Maheśvara[7] in which goddess Umā is shown seated on the left thigh of the ithyphallus Śiva who is seated on a throne in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose having his right leg folded and placed on the seat and the left one pendent. The four-armed Śiva has his front right hand held in the *varadamudrā*, whereas by his front left hand he embraces the goddess. The goddess is two armed She has placed her right hand on the left shoulder of her lord, whereas the left hand stretched hetween the

1. Bhattasali, N. K., *IBBDM*, p. 123.
2. *Saundaryalaharī*, vv. 40 ff.
3. Banerjee, J. N. *DHI*, p. 469.
4. *JISOA*, II, 1934, p. 1, pl. I.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Banerjee, *DHI*, p. 96.
7. Sinha, C. P., *Early Sculpture of Bihar*, fig. 54.

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chest is touching the finger of the right hand. Śiva has matted locks of hair and a number of ornaments over the person. Likewise, Pārvatī or Umā has also matted locks of hair and several ornaments adorning her body. The bull, the vehicle of Śiva, has been carved seated just below the right leg of the god. The lion, the vehicle of the goddess, is, however, conspicuous by its absence. The drapery has been treated in the typically Muṇḍeśvarī fashion, and as such the sculpture belongs to the Post-Gupta period.

The Patna Museum possesses a sculpture in the form of a stele from Saraikela which represents Umā-Maheśvara with the *vāhana* bull on the pedestal.[1] Śiva, the two armed deity, has been represented as seated with the left leg folded and placed on the seat and the right leg folded but raised in *lalitāsana*. Pārvatī on his left side is shown seated on the left thigh of the lord. They are beholding each other somewhat affectionately. The left hand of Śiva carried at the back of the goddess is catching hold of her left shoulder, while the right hand raised up in the *abhaya-mudrā* is having some indistinct object. Śiva is *ūrdhvareta*. His hair has been arranged into *jaṭāmukuṭa*. The goddess has placed her right hand on the thigh of her lord, whereas her left hand is also kept loosely on her left knee. Her hair as well is arranged in the form of a *jaṭā* She puts on a double stringed necklace and triple stringed waist-girdle besides putting on armlets and head ornament which are quite clear. Śiva is also putting on an *ekāvali*. The bull, the *vāhana* of the god, seated on the pedestal looks up reverentially at the divine couple.

The sculpture from Saraikela has been dated in the Patna Museum Catalogue in the 12th century A. D.[2] but U. P. Shah and P. L. Gupta have rightly observed that "from a fresh study of the art, it is clear that it is earlier in age."[3] U. P. Shah and P. L. Gupta further observed that the legs of Śiva are rather

1. *JOI*, XVIII, fig. 1 (PM. Arch. No. 10814.)
2. Gupta, P.L., *PMCA*, p. 93.
3. *JOI*, XVIII, p. 153.

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crudely modelled but the figure of Pārvatī and the torso of Śiva are reminiscent of classical tradition. The bull at the lower end of the pedestal has been rendered vigorously. From all these and from the beautiful modelling of the faces, the sculpture may be dated around the 6th or early 7th century A. D.[1]

At least three bronze statuettes are known from Kurkihara, presently preserved in the Patna Museum, which represent Umā and Maheśvara in close embrace of each other. A highly remarkable statuette from this place depicts the two-armed god seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus seat placed over a rectangular pedestal with his left leg folded and placed on the seat and the right one pendent and resting over a miniature lotus emerging from the pedestal itself.[2] The Devī is seated in the *sukhāsana* pose on the left thigh of the lord, with her right leg likewise pendent. Śiva has been shown embracing the goddess and catching her left breast, while by his left hand extended near her right breast, he is gesticulating and looking lovingly at her. The bashful goddess in return is also looking at him affectionately and embracing the lord by her right hand and placing it on his right shoulder, her left hand being placed on her knee. The god is ithyphallus. The respective vehicles of both the god and the goddess have been carved on the pedestal being separated by the pilasters. The *prabhāmaṇḍala* at the back is oval and externally decorated with the flame designs and topped by the *kīrttimukha* with the flames rising from its head.

In still another statuette, both the god and the goddess have been displayed in a very natural way.[3] The god is, however, four-armed. As in the preceding example, Śiva seated in *lalitāsana* is embracing the goddess seated in the *sukhāsana* pose on his left thigh by his normal hand in such a way that he is touching the lower part of

1. *JOI*, XVII, p. 153.
2. Sinha, B. P., *Bharatīya Kalā Ko Bihar Kī Dena*, fig. 119a.
3. *JISOA*, II, 1934, pl. XXXII.

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her breast by it, while he is touching her chin lovingly by his normal right hand. The god is holding a lotus flower by his back left and grasping a *khaṭvaṅga* by his back right hand. The goddess in turn is also embracing the god by her right hand, placing it on his right shoulder, while she has leisurely placed her left hand on her knee and held in it an unblossomed lotus by its stalk. The god is ithyphallus. While Śiva has been looking lovingly at the faee of the goddeess, the bashful goddess has also been casting side glance at her lord. Just below the pendent legs and not on the pedestal, are carved miniature figures of their respective vehicles, the bull and the lion over the back of which are placed the pendent legs of the lord and the goddess. There is a slightly oval halo behind the head of the god decorated with the circular motifs. The back-rest of the throne attached to the pedestal and back of the imge is partly damaged, but it was obviously adorned with the bead motifs.

The third image from Kurkihāra resembles considerably with the preceding one excepting that the god has a trident (*tr śūla*), and not a *khaṭvaṅga*, in the back left hand, the object in the back right hand being not clear.[1] The gddess is seated in *lalitāsana* (and not in *sukhāsena*) with her left leg (instead of the right leg) pendent. The general treatment of the statuette is, however, not as attractive as it is in the preceding example.

A beautiful black basalt image of Umā-Maheśvara found at Antichak (the Vkramaśīla excavation site) in the district of Bhagalpur shows both the god and the goddess seated in close embrace in *viśvapadma* on a *tri-ratha* pedestal.[2] Śiva has been endowed with four hands, the upper right hand holding a *nīlotpala*, the lower right touching the chin of Umā, the upper left holding the *triśūla*, while the lower left hand is touching the left breast of the goddess. The

1. Sinha, B. P., *op. cit.*, fig. 119.
2. *JBPP*, II, 1978, pp. 162-63.

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right hand of Umā is placed on the shoulder of the god while in her left hand she holds a mirror-like object, simulating a lotus with a long stalk, the chief characteristic of some Buddhist goddesses such as Tārā. Stylised back slab is decorated with flying Vidyādhara couple and a Kīrttimukha. The bull and the lion being the respective *vāhanas* of the deities are carved on the lower portion of the pedestal. In the centre of the pedestal, there is a dancing figure with a *kopāla* on the left palm. Devotee couples are shown in the two corners by the side of the *vāhanas*. By the side of the bull, there is a male devotee in kneeling posture with the palms folded (in *añjalimudrā*), while the standing female devotee is shown by the side of the lion The Umā-Maheśvara image from Antichak is a typical specimen belonging to the 11th-12th century A. D.

There is a remarkable image of Umā-Maheśvara (Fig. 5) belonging to the Broadley collection, presently housed in the Patna Museum.[1] Śiva has been shown seated on a double petalled lotus in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose with his right leg pendent and the left one folded and placed on a lotus seat. He is ithyphallus and four armed The goddess Umā is seated on the Lord's left thigh in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose with her left leg pendent and right one folded and placed on the thigh of the god. Śiva by his front right hand is touching lovingly the chin of the goddess and by his front left hand he is embracing rather catching hold of her left breast. By his back right hand he is carring the *dhaturā* flower and by his back left hand he is holding his special symbol the *triśūla*. The goddess as well is embracing closely the god by her right hand and she is holding a mirror by her left hand. Their respective *vāhanas*, the bull and the lion, have been depicted on the pedestal on miniature lotus flowers. On the proper right corner there is a devotee in *añjali mudrā*. Flying Gandharvas have been shown above. Stylistically, the sculpture may be placed in the 11th-12th century A.D.

Of approximately the same date is another image of Umā-Maheśvara from Bhelahi[2] near Raxoul in the district of East Cham-

1. Patna Museum Arch. No. 1674.
2. *JBRS*, XLIII, pp. 64, 66, (Patna Museum Arch. No. 10889).

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paran. The sculpture represents both the god and the goddess in a manner quite similar to the preceding example, though it differs only in minute details. There is, however, one additional feature in the Bhelahi example and it is that in between the two vehicles of the god and the goddess Ṛṣī Bhṛngī completely decrepit, rather all bones, has been shown dancing. The sculpture is in a much better state of preservation and better executed than the image of the Broadley collection.

Images of Umā Maheśvara have also been obtained from Deo Barunarak[1] in the district of Rohtas and Dharmaranya in the Gaya district.[2] There is a remarkable piece of sculpture in the Asutosh Museum[3] collection which probably hails from Rajgir in the district of Nalanda. The sculpture represents Śiva and Umā not in a sitting posture but standing side by side on two separate lotus pedestals. The goddess is standing to the left of lord Śiva who is ithyphallus and four armed, holding *Vīnā* by his front hands, *triśūla* with a sufficiently long staff by his back right hand and embraces the goddess standing to his left by his back left hand which is shown placed on the left shoulder of the goddess. The goddess displays *tarjanī mudrā* by the right hand somewhat raised, whereas by her left hand hanging by her side she is holding a somewhat indistinct object, most probably a mirror. Immediately below the lotus over which Śiva stands is the figure of the bull, the *vāhana* of the lord facing towards the right. Both the god and the goddess have somewhat eliptical halo behind their head (Fig. 6). The present sculpture is in a great deal sensitively modelled and welI executed than the seated pair.[4] Though the distinction in the opinion of Asher[5] only indicates a different hand, not time.

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1. Asher, Frederick H, *The Art of Eastern India*, figs. 130, 131.
2. *Ibid.* fig. 148.
3. *Ibid.* fig. 188.
4. *Ibid.* fig. 185.
5. *Ibid.* p. 86.

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KALYĀNASUNDARA-MŪRTTI OF ŚIVA :—

Among the various iconographic representation of Śiva with goddess Pārvatī the Kalyānasundara-mūrtti is an interesting and fascinating one beloging to the Saumya or Śānta group of the images. It is a composite sculpture representing the marriage ceremony of Śiva and Pārvāti. It is also known as the Vaivāhika or Pāṇigrahaṇamūrtti. The Purāṇas contain an interesting story sugesting the reason behind the rise of this form of images.[1]

The *Śiva Purāṇa*[2] and the *Padma Purāṇa*[3] contain the stories which record the circumstances leading to the marriage of Śive and Pārvatī. The gods and the Brāhmṇas were continuously harassed by the demon king Tāraka and none except the offspring of Śiva could subdue him. But Śiva, after the death of his wife Satī, the daughter of Dakṣa Prajāpati, was leading the life of an ascetic and had decided not to marry again. But since only the son of Śiva could overpower the demon king, the gods became interested in getting Śiva married. Moreover, the former wife Satī was reborn as Pārvatī to the god of Himalayas (Himavān) and she was practising penance for obtaining Śiva as her lord. Meanwhile, Kāma on being induced by the gods tried his artifices upon Śiva, who burnt him to ashes in a fit of anger. The gods also implored Śiva to marry again for the welfare of the humanity. Śiva acceded to their requests and gave his consent to marry Pārvatī, the daughter of the mountain. Thus, the Kalyānasundara-mūrtti came into being for depicting the marriage ceremony of Śive and Pārvatī.

According to the story narrated in the *Varāha Purāṇa*,[4] Śiva once assuming the form of an old decrepit Brāhmaṇa, approached Pārvatī absorbed in her austerities, begging for food, as he was feeling very hungry. Pārvatī asked him to finish his bath and other ablutions and take the meal. The old Brāhmaṇa went to the river close to

1. *Varāha Purāṇa* (Vangavasi edn.), pp. 84-85; *MP*, ch. CLIV.
2. *Śiva Purāṇa, Rudra-saṁhitā, Pārvatī Khaṇḍa*, II ff.
3. *Padma Purāṇa, Śṛṣṭhī Khaṇḍ*, pp. 45ff.
4. *Varāha Purāṇa* (Vanravāsī edn.), pp. 81-85; *MP*, ch. CLIV.

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Pārvatī's hermitage, and no sooner he got down in the water than he contrived to be caught by a crocodile. He called out Pārvatī for help. But Pārvatī though she came to the river side, could not stretch her arm for help which was never meant to be held by other than that of her lord, even in helping others. Perplexed at this feeling, she stood still for some moment undecided; but the danger of the guest being swallowed by the crocodile became patent very soon and she had to give up her vow of not being touched by a hand other than that of Śiva. She stretched out her hand and caught hold of the hand of the old Brāhmaṇa and pulled him out of the water and the crocodile had also left him. Pleased with Pārvatī, Śiva showed her his real self, and she was immensely gratified with her Lord for having caught hold of his hand. She dedicated herself to Śiva and the regular marriage was performed later on.

The *Matsya Purāṇa*[1] adds that the Devas had collected the items of decoration (*ivya maṇḍapa saṁbhāra*) on the Gandha-mārdana mountain for the marriage of Śiva with Pārvatī, the daughter of Himalaya. Chāmuṇḍā gave him a *kapāla-mālā*, Indra the elephant-skin, Vāyu adorned his bull and Sūrya, Chandra and Agni became the lights in his three eyes. Kubera gave him a necklace of *mahāra-tnas*, Varuṇa a garland of unfading flowers and the seven oceans became a mirror for him and the god was pleased to have a vision of his form in the waters of the ocean.

The Āgamas give a detailed description of the Kalyānasundara-mūrtti of Śiva. According to these texts, Śiva and Pārvatī should be the central figures. Śiva standing in *tribhaṅga* pose with front right hand stretched out to receive the right hand of the goddess Pārvatī and his front left hand should be in the *varada*-pose. He should carry *paraśu* in the back right hand and *mṛga* in the back left and be adorned with the *jaṭā-mukuṭa*, crescent moon and other usual ornaments. The right arm of the goddess should be stretchcd out to receive the god. Viṣṇu along with Lakṣmī and Bhūmi acting as parents should

1. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch, CLIV. 441-47.

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be ready to pour water in the ceremony of giving away the bride to the groom. Brahmā acting as priest should be shown seated on a lotus in front of a *kuṇḍa* with the fire burning. Brahmā should have four faces and wear matted locks and *yajñopavīta*, and carry *Śruva* and *Śruka* in the two front hands and rosary and *kamaṇḍalu* in the back ones. Besides them eight Dikpālakas, Siddhas, Yakṣas, Ṛṣīs, Gandharvas, Mātṛkas and a host of other gods and goddesses should be shown with the pleasing faces.[1]

The Museum at Patna is in possession of two stone images[2] representing the marriage scene of Śiva with Pārvatī In both the Kalyānasundara images, Śiva and Pārvatī have been representing side by side and not in front of each other. Pārvatī standing to the left of Śiva. Śiva has been endowed with four hands, holding a round object in the upper right hand and Pārvatī's right hand in the lower one. He holds also a trident in the upper left hand, while the lower left hand rests on his left thigh. Pārvatī standing to the left of her lord, is holding the right hand of Śiva by her right hand, while she holds a mirror in her left hand. Brahmā acting as the priest at the time of the marriage, is four faced. He is seated on the ground with the flames issuing in front of him from the sacrificial fire. Viṣṇu with *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* and Indra with *karaṇḍa mukutā* attended upon Śiva at the time of his marriage. On the pedestal are seen the figures of lion, the *vāhana* of Pārvatī, and the couchant bull, the *vāhana* of Śiva, along with the figures of the dancers and the musicions carved in low relief. One of the images comes from Gaya.[3] (Fig. 7).

SADYOJĀTA :—

The Sadyojāta representations form a class by themselves in which a newly born babe is shown lying by the side of the mother—the mother being the Ādi Śakti, the eternal fertility and Creator deity and

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1. Rao, T. A. G., *EHI*, II, i, pp. 338-42.
2. PM Arch. Nos. 6047 and 10648.
3. Gupta, P. L., *PMCA*, p. 72.

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the child stands for Śiva, the eternal Puruṣa.[1] The word Sadyojāta means "a child just bron", one just arrived from the other world and yet unsullied and untainted by contamination from this world.[2] And these images exactly represent the idea conveyed by the word Sadyojāta. B. P. Sinha has mentioned the following characteristics of the Sadyojāta images : "(a) a lady lying on her couch reclining to her left, (b) her left hand on the pillow and touching her head, (c) a lotus flower in her right hand, (d) a woman sitting near the feet and shampooing one of the legs, (e) a child on the left side of the lady, (f) representations of Gaṇeśa and Kārttikeya on the upper side of the panel, (g) more maids or minor goddesses outside the couch on both ends, (h) *liṅga* with *yonī* in panel, (i) a representation of the Navagrahas."[3]

However, all these features enumerated by B. P. Sinha are not found in all the extant images. N. K. Bhattasali has also mentioned these features of the Sadyojāta images in the Dacca Museum Catalogue.[4] However, the features of the Sadyojāta images as enumerated by the two scholars clearly point to their Śaiva character. And on the evidence of the *Brahma Purāṇa*,[5] Bhattasali[6] has identified the mother to be no other than Ādi-Śakti or Pārvatī herself and the child, lord Śiva himself. According to the legend in the *Brahma-Purāṇa*; "when the divine daughter of the Mountain came with a garland in her hands to the assembly of gods where she was to choose her husband, Śiva, in order to test her, assumed the form of a child and was found sleeping on the lap of the bride. She perceiving the child and coming to know through meditation that he was the god Siva himself, accepted him with pleasure. Then the daughter of the Mountain, glad to receive the husband that her heart desired for, returned from

1. Sinha, B. P., *Archaeology and Art of India*, p. 154.
2. Bhattasali, N. K, *IBBSDM*, p. 137.
3. Sinha, B. P., *op. cit.*, pp. 154-55.
4. Bhattasali, N. K. *op. cit.*, pp. 135-36.
5. *Brahma Purāṇa*, Chap. XXXVIII, p. 177.
6. Bhattasali, N. K., *op. cit.*, pp. 137-38.

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the assembly holding the child against her breast".[1] It is thus evident from the legend as embodied in the Purāṇa that the Sadyojāta images represent Śiva in the form of a babe by the side of Pārvatī and these images are thus according to N. K. Bhattasali[2] only a variety of the *Vaivāhika* images—the Kalyānasundara-mūrtti of Śiva.

A highly interesting image of Sadyojāta was acquired for the Museum of the Department of Ancient Indian History & Archaeology, Patna University, some time back.[3] (Fig. 8) Unfortunately the exact findspot of the image is unknown. But it is reported to have been found somewhere from Bihar. It represents the goddess lying on a cot with her legs stretched as in other images and she is also reclining to the left. The child is shown lying in a special small panel to her left near her breast. A *liṅga* fixed in the *yonī* pedestal h s been shown towards her left downwards. Representations of Gaṇeśa, Kārttikeya and the Navagrahas are conscupious by their absence and so also minor goddesses or attendants on either end of the bed and the maidservant shampooing the lady are also missing. These features thus make the image a unique and rare one. It is the presence of the *liṅga* with the *Yonī* pedestal only that makes the identification of the image as a Śaiva one possible. Otherwise there is no other sign to help us to identify the image as that of Sadyajāta. On the basis of the stone, the black basalt out ef which the image has been prepared and its artistic style it can be placed in the Pāla Period in the 11th-12th century A. D.

S. C. Saran has recently published another image[4] reperesenting Sadyojāta theme which was obtained in course of excavations at Antichak, the site of one time famous Vikramaśīla University founded by the illustrious Pāla ruler Dharmapāla. Unfortunately the

1. *Brahma Purāṇa*, Chap. XXXVIII, p. 177.
2. Bhattasali, N. K., *op, cit.*, p. 138.
3. Sinha, B. P., *op. cit.*, p. 155.
4. *JBPP*, Vol. II, pl. XX, fig. 3.

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image is damaged on the upper right portion and as such some of the features appears to be missing. In this image as well Pārvatī has been repersented as lying on her cot and reclining to her left with her head resting on her palm, the back portion of the head touching the *liṇga* of Śiva. The child Śiva is lying on the cot near her breast. Her legs are crossed. She is holding something indistinct in her right hand which is broken. A female attendant is shown sitting near her feet in kneeling posture. The left foot of the goddess is raised and the left sole is shampooed by the female attendant while her right leg is resting on the knee of the attendant. Another female figure is also shown standing in *Kaṭihasta* pose on the left side of the cot. She is also holding some indistinct object in her right hand, rendered as touching the belly just below the breast. Kārttikeya has been shown standiag on the upper portion of the panel and just possible Gaṇeśa and Navagrahas may have occupied the portion of the panel now broken. A small devotee is also shown sitting in a kneeling posture with folded hands. The unique feature of the panel is that the *liṅga* of Śiva has been represented without the *yoni* pedestal. Secondly, the head of the goddess is shown resting on the left arm; usually two, there is only one female attendant shown shampooing the left foot of the goddess.

Another image of Sadyojāta discovered from Bihar is preserved in the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art at Calcutta. (Fig 9).

The Patna Museum is also in possession of a stone female figure[1] reclining on bed. A small male child (Śiva) is lying by her side. Śiva-liṅga is shown on the stela while a conch-shell and two incense burners are shown on the pedestal. A femele figure is represented on the right side of the principal female figure. On stylistic ground, this may be dated in the 12th century A. D.

In this context it may be noted that it has been suggested on

1. Patna Museum, Arch. No. 11102.

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the basis of the *Skanda Purāṇa* that such sculptures represent the Gṛhapati form of Śiva.[1] Thus the female lying on the bed has been taken as Suchishmati, the wife of the sage Visvānara and the child is Śiva, born as Gṛhpati. But this presumption does not seem to be very convincing.[2] In this connection B. N. Sharma has drawn our attention to an image of this type in the Dacca Museum bearing a short inscription which has been read as "Umā-Sailamyī", i.e. 'Uma made of stone'.[3] It is thus of considerable importance as it clearly reveals the identity of the reclining figure as that Umā or Pārvatī, the daughter of the Mountain King Himavana.[4]

GAṄGĀDHARAMŪRTTI OF ŚIVA—

The Gaṅgādhara form of Śiva has very beautifully been rendered in stone sculptures, an example of which is not wanting in Bihar. To understand the reason behind the emergenee of this aspect of Śiva a special study is required from the point of view of historical perspective. A detailed account of this charming and fascinating form of Śiva is found in the *Vanaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*.[5] As the story goes, the sixty thousand sons of the king Sagara had been cursed and burnt to ashes by the sage Kapila. As they had doubted the sage having carried the sacrificial horse of their father to the netherworld (*patāla-loka*), they had attached him. Bhagiratha, a later member of the same family, performed severe susterities to invoke the celestial river Gaṅgā to purify the ashes of the sinful sons of Sagara so that they may be emancipated. The river goddess Gaṅgā was pleased and agreed to descend down to the earth and to flow up to the nether-

1. Trivedi, R. D. in *East and West*, Rome, Vol. XXIV, Nos. 1-2, pp. 141-143, Figs. 1-3.
2. *K. P. Jayaswal Commemoration Volume*, Patna, 1981, p. 167.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
4. Sivaramamurti, C., *Some Aspects of Indian Culture*, New Delhi, 1969, pp. 13-14.
5. *Mahābhārata, Vanaparvan* (P.C. Roy's translation), CVII-CIX, pp. 336-40.

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world to purify the ashes of Sagara's sons. But it was only Śiva who could bear the impact of the vigorous and forceful downpour of the celestial river on his head. So Bhagiratha prayed to Śiva to receive Gaṅgā on his head. Satisfied with the austerities of Bhagiratha, Śiva consented to receive Gaṅgā in his matted locks of hair. Proud of her might, the river came down with all her forces as if to crush Śiva, but found herself lost in the tangled mass of Śiva's locks before she was able to reach the earth. At the request of Bhagiratha, Śiva let Gaṅgā flow down on the earth from his locks in a tiny trickle. The river goddess, the heavenly Ganges, is believed since then to abide in Śiva's matted hair as one of his consorts. This, however, earned for Śiva the epithet of Gaṅgādhara.

The Āgamic literature furnishes us with elaborate instructions regarding the composition of the Gaṅgādhara form of Śiva. He has been described as four-armed, standing with his right leg planted firmly and vertically on the earth and the left one slightly bent. The standing figure of Umā is to be portrayed by the side of the god, who should be shown caressing the chin of the goddess with his front right hand and embracing her with the corresponding left hand. With the back right hand he should stretch a lock of the *jaṭā* in order to release Gaṅgā represented in the anthropomorphic form, and with his back left hand he should carry a *mṛga* (black buck). Finally, Umā's face should express jealousy on account of the presence of the co-wife Gaṅgā. The sculptor should also portray the figure of Bhagirath performing the penance.[1]

There is a sufficiently large number of the images of Gaṅgādhara Śiva from the different parts of the country, mostly from South India. The sculptural representations of the Gaṅgādhara form from Eastern India, more particularly from Bihar, are extremely rare. There is, as

1. The above details are contained in the *Aṁśumadbhedāgama*, and the *Śilparatna*. The *Kamikāgama* and the *Kāraṇāgama* furnish some additional facts. Cf. Rao, T. A. G., *EHI*, Vol. II, i, pp. 315-17 and ii, pp. 161-63.

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a matter of fact, only one specimen of Gaṅgādhara Śiva so far known from Bihar. The image comes from Sultanganj in the district of Bhagalpur. Sultanganj is well known on account of the find of the copper Buddha from the place which now decorates the Museum and Art Gallery of Birmingham.

The image of Gaṅgādhara is executed in bold relief over a rock of the Murli hill situated on the bank of the river Ganges at this place. Gaṅgadhara Śiva has been rendered four-armed, standing in the *samapādasthānaka* pose. The two lower hands being mutilated, it is impossible to make out as to what they may have carried. In the upper right hand, the deity holds a trident, while with the corresponding left hand, he spreads an elongated lock of *jaṭā* in order to release the stream of Gaṅgā. On the proper left side, a mermaid-like figure represented just above the elongated lock of Śiva's *jaṭā* appears to be the representation of the river goddess Gaṅgā. The strange, emaciated figure squatting near the left foot of the god is very much indistinct. An entirely round head with the beak-like projection makes it difficult to identify it with Bhagiratha who should have normally been depicted close to the deity. As such, the peculiarly carved figure may legitimately be taken to be that of a Śiva-gaṇa. To the right of the god is a mutilated figure, the traces of which suggest it to be the figure of Nandin, the *vāhana* of Śiva.

Śiva is wearing a lower garment tied with a waist-belt and hanging up to the knee. The loin-cloth is shown through deep incision on the surface. The figure is decorated with the snake-shaped armlets, wristlets, two necklaces and a *yajñopavīta* across the chest. The hair is back-brushed and knotted at the top in a *jaṭāmukuṭa*.

According to the canonical text, Śiva should have been portrayed with his right leg vertically planted on the earth and the left one slightly bent. But in the present example, Śiva is represented in a state of equipoise (*samabhaṅga*) in order to show the divine being completely calm and immovable. The absence of the divine consort

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Umā in this panel is equally significant and may suggest an early date for the sculpture. As a matter of fact, the early representation of Gaṅgādhara Śiva at the Pallava cave in Tiruchirapalli, assignable to the beginning of the 7th century A.D., is marked by the absence of the figure of Umā. With a few exceptions of the early sculptures, Gaṅgādhara Śiva is usually accompanied by his consort in later representations.

In this connection mention may be made of an interesting piece of sculpture from Rajaona, a village near Luckeesarai in the district of Monghyr. As a matter of fact, this sculpture belongs to a group of four sculptures which together depict the scene of Arjuna's penance, as described in the *Mahābhārata*. The particular piece of sculpture under survey appears to represent the Gaṅgādhara form of Śiva as depicting that part of the story when Gaṅgā, who had been lost in the labyrinth of Śiva's locks of hair, had been released by the god. Śiva has been shown in the *mahārājalīlā* pose with his right hand resting on the thigh, and from the left hand he is spreading one of the locks of his hair to release the streams of Gaṅgā. Śiva is ithyphallus with his right side of the head adorned with the moon and a snake over his shoulder. He has two male attendants at his back and a kneeling devotee with folded palms just behind him. In front of Śiva is the goddess Gaṅgā who is shown kneeling with palms folded in *añjali-mudrā*. She has been kneeling on her vehicle, the *makara*, and facing Śiva as if she is acknowledging with deep regard her gratitude towards the Lord for having been released by him for fulfilling the purpose for which she had descended down on the earth from her heavenly abode. In the sculpture, Gaṅgā has thus just been released from his matted locks of hair by the Lord. A man standing behind the goddess Gaṅgā holds aloft a parasol over her head. The sculpture very beautifully executed as an example of the Gupta classic is datable around 5th-6th century A.D. (Fig. 10).[1]

1. *ASIAR, 1911-12, plates,* Tewari, S. P., *Hindu Iconography*, fig. 7.

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ŚIVA IN THE GUISE OF KIRĀTA–

The *Vanaparvan* of the Great Epic *Mahābhārata* contains a very interesting story, according to which Śiva himself at one time had to assume the form of a Kirāta. The entire story is covered by one chapter entitled '*Kirāta-parva-adhyāya*'. According to the story, when the Pāṇḍavas were in distress, during the period of exile, Arjuna at the request of his eldest brother Yudhiṣṭhira went to see Śakra (Indra), the lord of the gods, and Śaṅkara (Śiva), the god of the gods. Arjuna started on his mission alone with a fine bow and a sword with a golden hilt. On the way, he entered a forest which pleased him so much that he remained there performing harsh austerities. He wore the bark of trees, used *kuśa* grass as his bed, and was decorated with a staff (*daṇḍa*) and skin, He ate dry leaves of the trees which had fallen. He performed severe austerities that in the first month he ate fruits on every third night, in the second every sixth, while in the third month he ate only once in a fortnight and in the fourth month once only. He remained standing with his arms raised aloft, standing on the top of one toe. Pleased with his severe austerities, Indra came to him in the form of an ascetic and asked him if *mokṣa* was his aim in performing the penance. Arjuna replied that his main goal was to secure weapons to defeat their enemies, the Kauravas, and wipe off the shame and disgrace. Thereupon, Indra revealed his true form and asked Arjuna then to direct his penance to Śiva and obtain his grace. Arjuna then started performing the most severe penance. The great sages got alarmed at the penance of Arjuna and they in a body approached Mahādeva (Śiva) and told him; "Pārtha is performing great austerities in the Himalayan tracts. He has clouded the four quarters with smoke and is persevering in his performance. We do not know what he desires. He has troubled us; so, please stop him." Having heard the words of apprehension from these great sages, Śiva told them that they need not be afraid of Arjuna because the great god had already known what was there in Arjuna's mind. Arjuna did not want the kingdom of heaven or wealth or long life. He would do what was wanted by Arjuna. The sages delighted with Śiva's assurance went to their respective places. After the departure of the sages, Śiva

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with Pārvatī, dressed as hill man with thousands of *bhūta* females dressed in various costumes, went to the place where Arjuna was performing austerities. At that time a wicked Daitya, named Muka, was trying to attack Arjuna in the form of a wild boar. Seeing the boar, Arjuna took up his bow and arrow and addressed him in the following words; "As you desire to kill me though I have done you no harm, I shall despatch you to the presnece of Yama first." Seeing that Arjuna was striking the demon, Mahādeva (who was in the guise of Kirāta - a hill man) asked him to forbear, saying, "I desired this animal afore time." Arjuna did not pay any heed to his words and let fly his arrows. At the same time, Śiva shot an arrow at the boar and the demon died after forsaking his assumed form of the boar and showing his real one. Arjuna then saw Śiva attended upen by women and addressed him as follows : "Who are you, roaming in this forest surrounded with females ? Are you not afraid of this dense forest ? And why did you strike the boar which was my due ? The boar came here to kill me and what you have performed today is against the rules of the chase, So, O Hill-man, I shall relieve thee of the life today." The Kirāta only laughed on hearing this for he was no other than Śiva himself and said; "We live in this forest and are not afraid of it. But why do you live here, and why do you roam about alone in the lonely forest ?" Arjuna replied, "I live here in the protection of the Gāṇḍīva (bow) and Narācha (arrow). This demon came to slay me in the guise of an animal." The Kirāta then accused Arjuna of taking his prey. He said, " I was chasing this animal, it was killed by my arrow, this was the object of my chase and it is my prey. You take my prey and at the same time accuse me of taking yours. I shall shortly relieve you of your life." Arjuna became enraged upon hearing his words and began to shoot. Śiva caught the arrows with his hands. At this Arjuna became astonished and praised him saying, "Who art thou ? Deva, Yakṣa, Rudra, Sura or Asura ? Only the holder of the Piṇāka bow can withstand the Narācha short from my bow, I shall end your career very shortly with this Narācha." Arjuna began to shoot fast; but all his arrows were caught by Śiva, Then the arrows fell short in Arjuna's quiver and he became afraid. He thought of

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Agni who had given him a quiver in which arrows shall never end (*akṣaya tuna*). He began to think : Who is this man who catches all arrows that I shoot? What shall I do with the bow when I have no arrows? I shall slay him with bow." But the bow was also taken away from him. He attacked the supposed Kirāta with his sword; but the sword alse broke into pieces. After losing his sword Arjuna began to throw stones and fight with trees; but Śiva caught all these missiles. Failing in all these attempts, Arjuna took to his fists. Śiva and Arjuna fought for some time. Then at last, Arjuna, bruised and senseless, fell in a heap. Arjuna was again on his feet in a moment. He made an earthen Liṅgam of Śiva and began to worship the god. But the garlands and flowers he put on the Liṅgam flew to the head of the Kirāta. Arjuna then came to realise that the Kirāta was none else than Śiva himself. At once, he fell at the feet of the god and begged his forgiveness. In the text we find Śiva saying to Arjuna, "You were formerly a great sage, so I give you (fresh) eyes (*divya-chakṣus*). Behold me." Śiva was pleased and bestowed on him the weapons he desired, viz. the Pāśupatastra and disappeared. Soon all the other gods and guardians of the eight quarters also appeared and gave him their own special weapons.

After his successful penance Arjuna spent some time in the Indraloka at the invitation of Indra, and then returned to Dharmaputra and other brothers.

Bharvi's *Kirātārjuniyam* gives almost similar story as found in the *Mahābhārata*. The story of Arjuna having performed penances for securing weapons from Śiva and Indra has been represented in art at a number of places both in Northern and Southern India.

Fragments of a pillar discovered at Rajaona near Luckeesarai in the western part of the distriet of Monghyr[1] depict the scence as narrated in the literature. The beginning and the end of the story is shown in one panel in a manner that the scene in the right half of

1. *ASIAR*, 1911.12, plates.

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the panel is the Prologue and that in the left half the epilogue of the story. The right half of the bas-relief represents Arjuna during the performance of the austerities in the Himalayan forest. The single tree in the centre serves to represent the forest as well as to divide the panel into two different parts. Arjuna has been shown standing on one leg holding a rosary aloft with both the hands. Around him on the four sides are four bowls with flames issuing from them suggesting that Arjuna was performing the harshest possible austerities, beling surrounded by fire in summer and submerged in cold water in winter. At the extreme right of the bas-relief is the headless figure of a male standing in front of Arjuna wearing a loin cloth (*dhotī*) and another piece of cloth (*uttarīya*) on his breast. This may be the representation of god Śiva dressed as a Kirāta. Unfortunately, the representation of the story up to the time of the fight is lost. The slaying of the boar and the fight with arrows was most probably represented in the next panel which is entirely missing The bas-relief in the panel marked 'B' represents the fight between Śiva and Arjuna, first with the bow or sword, and then with their hands and fists. About one-third of the bas-relief on the extreme left of this panel is unfortunately broken and missing and shows only two pairs of human fists obviously of two different men. One pair probably belongs to Śiva (Kirāta) and the second may be that of Arjuna. As suggested by the number of arrows, the Kirāta who faces left holds a bow in his right hand in a manner suggested of the fact that he has snatched Arjuna s bow away from him. It is already narrated in the story as to how all the arrows of Arjuna were caught by the Kirāta till the stock was exhausted and how Arjuna thereupon smote the Kirāta with his bow. The right end of the panel shows the pair (the Kirāta and Arjuna) wrestling with their fornt legs interlocked and hands drawing the chests towards each other. Both the Kirāta and Arjuna have their hair arranged into a top-knot; but the form of the top-knot of Kirāta is larger and more plump than that of Arjuna.

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1. *ASIAR*, pl. LXXIII. 3.

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The third panel marked 'C' on the Rajona pillar shows Arjuna falling at the feet of the Kirāta, and through prayers 'begging pardon for'. Śiva being pleased reveals to Arjuna his form with Pārvatī as Kailāśanātha and grants him the Pāśupatāstra. The kneeling Arjuna before the four-handed form of Śiva recalls Śiva saying "I give you now divine sight (*divya-chakṣu*) so that you can behold me." With the divine vision granted to Arjuna, he beholds Śiva in two stages, first with four hands, one of which indicates boon conferring pose (*varada-mudrā*) and next as seated on the mount Kailāśa with Umā by his side and with the serpents coiled round his neck, and with the penis erectum (*urdhvamedha*) exposed. This time he has only two hands. The left hand rests on Umā's shoulder and the right one is extended towards Arjuna in the significant attitude conferring boons on Arjuna. The boon in the bas-relief is the Pāśupatāstra. Arjuna kneels with a curved bow shown against him and the *añjali-mudrā* indicating the successful termination of his penance and the receipt of the reward. The four-handed figure standing before Pārtha (Arjuna) represents Pāśupatāstra, the knowledge of which Śiva imparted to Pārtha and which according to the *Mahābhārata* waited from thence on Pārtha as it did before on Śiva and looked like the embodiment of Yama. Śiva and Pārvatī seated on rocks stand for the idea of Śiva appearing before Arjuna with Pārvatī as the Lord of Kailāśa (Kailāśanātha). This scene is found in the right half of the bas-relief on the panel marked 'C'. Śiva and Pārvatī both are seated on the same rock which presumably suggested the Himalayas. Śiva's right hand is extended in the posture of benediction, while the left hand rests on Pārvatī's shoulder. There is no doubt about the identification of the figure. The Lokapālas and the gods came to Arjuna and enriched his store of weapons by giving away their special ones. The left half of the bas-relief on the panel marked 'A' contains the opening scene of 'Indra's-lokābhigamana-pārvva'. After the departure of the Lokapālas, Arjuna thought of his chariot. As he was thinking so, Mātulī, the divine charioteer, appeared on the scene with Indra's chariot. The scene shows Arjuna being driven in the car of India towards the land of the gods. There is a

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female figure kneeling on the back of a Makara, with the hands clasped in adoration. Evidently it represents goddess Gaṅgā on the back of her special vehicle, the Makara. A male attendant is found holding a parasol over her head. A peacock flies overhead with a garland. There are also figures of the Kinnara attendants, the Kīrttimukhas and the figures of Kārttikeya, etc., all the figures having been displayed with the divine touch.

BHAIRAVA :—

Śiva, one of the most popular deities of the Hindus, is regarded as a deity possessed of dual character, both benign and fierce, having been evolved from the benevolent-malevolent concept of the Vedic Rudra. Based on such an aspect of Śiva's character, images representing him in his Saumya and Rudra forms came to be prepared by the artists and worshipped by the people. Bihar seems to be no exception in this respect, for a sizeable number of the images of both the forms have been obtanined from different parts of the State.

Bhairva is amongst these of the terrific or fierce (Ugra) forms of Śiva, having no connection whatsoever with any of the particular Puraṇic stories narrating his exploits. He is so called by virtue of his being the protector of the universe (*bharaṇa*) and terrific in appearance (*bhīṣaṇa*). He is also known as Kālabhairava for even Kāla, the Lord of Death, trembles before him, as Āmardakka because he kills bad persons (*mardaṇa*) and as Pāpabhakṣaṇa as he swallows the sins of the devotees.

There is no doubt a sufficiently large number of images of Śiva from Bihar representing the god in the company of his divine consort Pārvatī (Umā-Maheśvara images), and in comparison to the images of Umā-Maheśvara, those of Bhairava is few and far between. But they are also not in such a small number that they cannot have yielded any significant influence on the religious life of the people of Bihar. As a matter of fact it appears that Bhairava may have played rather a dominant, at least an important, role in the religious life of the people of Bihar, more particularly during the early mediaeval period when the great Pāla rulers ruled over Bengal and Bihar and that too in the eastern part of the State.

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There are numerous texts which have described Bhairava in various ways. T.A. Gopinatha Rao, on the evidence of the *Rudra Yāmala*, has described as many as sixty-four Bhairavas and classified them under eight groups of eight each headed by Aṣitāṅga, Ruru, Chaṇḍa, Krodha, Unmatta, Kapāla, Bhīṣaṇa and Saṁhāra.[1] The *Viṣṇudharmottara*[2] has given a typical account of the deity. According to this work, Bhairava should have a flabby belly, round yellow eyes, side tusks and wide nostrils. He should be wearing a garland of skulls and adorned with snakes. He should be as dark as the rain cloud, with his garment resembling the colour of the elephant's skin. He should be possessed of several arms decorated with all sorts of weapons and should be represented as frightening Pārvatī with a snake. Hemadri's discription[3] of Bhairava is much similar. According to this description, Bhairava should possess a grim face with protruding teeth, a pot belly, a garland of skulls and serpents as ornaments.

Rao has described the inconography of Baṭuka Bhairava.[4] Baṭuka Bhairava, as pointed out by J. N. Banerjea, is the particular type usually found in the northern part of the country.[5] He is described as nude, terrific in appearance with protruding fangs, rolling and round eyes, his hand holding objects like sword, a *khaṭvaṅga*, a *śūla* or a *kapāla*, usually wearing wooden sandals and often shown accompanied by a dog.[6] In the *Baṭuka Bhairava Kalpa*[7] as well, he is mentioned as stark naked and riding upon a dog. He is further said to have *jaṭā*s of red colour, three eyes and a red body, carrying a *śūla*, a *pāśa*, a *damarū* and a *kapāla* in his hands and surrounded by a host of demons on all sides. The *Rūpamaṇḍana*,[8] however, provides

1. Rao, *op. cit.*, pp. 180-82.
2. *Viṣṇudharmottara*, III, ch. 59.
3. Bhattacharya, B.C., *Indian Images*, part I.
4. Rao, *op. cit.*, pp. 177 ff.
5. Banerjea, *DHI*, p. 466.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 466.
7. Rao, *op. cit.*, p. 178.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 177-78.

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him as many as eight arms, having *khaṭvaṅga*, *pāśa*, *śūla damrū*, *kapāla* and a snake in six of them, a piece of flesh in one of the remaining hands and the other held in the *abhaya* pose This work also provides the deity with a dog of the same colour as its master.

The *Śāradātilaka-tantra*[1] mentions three different kinds of images of Batuka Bhairava the *Sātvika*, the *Rājasika* and the *Tāmasika*. The *Sātvika* image, said to prevent unnatural death, is to show the deity young in appearance with joyful face, fair hair, beautiful ornaments, a pleasant expression and carrying in his two hands the trident and the staff. The *Rājasika* image, which satisfies all desires, should show him like the resplendent sun, adorned with a blood red garment, having smiling face and wearing an elephant's skin, the four hands carrying trident, skull, boon and protection by them. The *Tāmasika* image, which subdues enemies and scares away supernatural beings, is to represent him like a blue mountain, naked, with agarland of skulls holding in his eight hands kettle-drum, good, sword, lasso, protection, snake, bell and skull with snakes as ornaments and terrific fangs. The text is, however, silent with regard to the vehicle of the deity.

The sculptural representations of Bhairava, representing the terrifie aspect of Śiva, are, however, as already observed, not many in Bihar. A loose sculpture from the Muṇḍeśvarī temple in the district of Rohtas, belonging to the post-Gupta period, represents Bhairava standing on the back of a crouching human figure.[2] He is four-armed, holding a rosary in the front right hand and a skull-topped *khaṭvaṅga* somewhat damaged in the upraised back left hand. The back right hand is placed on the waist, while the front right hand appears to be holding a flower-like object. There is a plain halo behind the head of the god. He is ithyphallus and puts on a number of ornaments. He is, however, depicted not as much terrific as is usually done, rather there is serene repose on his face. His face is neither hideouslooking nor there are protruding fangs and skull-gar-

1. *Śāradātilaka-tantra*, ch. 20, p 59 in N. K. Bhattasali's *IBBSDM*, p. 133.
2. Sahai, B., *Iconography of Minor Hindu and Buddhist Deities*, p. 123.

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land. He is also slim-bodied. There are two attendants, each standing on his either side reverentially. The sculpture is damaged at the right top corner.

Other sculptural representations of Bhairava from Bihar almost all belong to the Pāla period which may be dated in between the 9th and 13th centuries A.D.

Mention may be made of two sculptures of Bhairava,[1] both of them representing Śiva in his fierce aspect. Both the sculptures are almost perfectly intact. The Patna Museum is in the possession of one of the two nicely preserved sculptures discovered in and around Abhaipur railway station in the Monghyr district. Carved out of black basalt, the sculpture in the form of a stele, somewhat conical at the top with a *pañcharatha* pedestal, represents the deity standing on a double-petalled lotus in the *tribhaṅga* pose with his head tilted to the left. The god has four arms. The upper right hand has a skull cup. The lower left hand holds a triśūla. The object in his back left hand is indistinct. The deity, who is endowed with a hideous face, has large round eyes bulging out of their sockets. He has moustaches and beards neatly plaited on both the sides of the cheeks. He has also the mark of the third eye shown vertically on the forehead. A human skull appears to be tucked into the headgear, whereas flames rising out of the head take the place of the coiffure (*jaṭāmukuṭa*) in the form of a *maṇḍala*. Disproportionately large teeth of the deity are visible out of his parted lips. He puts on a large garland from which a number of human heads are found hanging. Flames have been shown issuing not only from the head but also on the stele on the three sides of the deity converging at the top. All these would suggest that an attempt has been made in representing the fierce deity more fierce. To accentuate the ferocity of the deity, he has been provided not only with a garland of skulls, but also with the flames rising from his head and on the sides of his body. A miniature male attendant, practically nude save a very abbreviated loin cloth to his proper right

1. *JBRS*, LXI, 1975, pp. 66 ff, pls. IV and V.

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is shown dancing on a separate plain cubical pedestal. He too is hideous looking, bearded and moustached, with his hair arranged into a *jaṭā*. He has been shown devoid of flesh with toothless jaws, sunken cheeks and eyes deep set in their coteries. Chest bones, veins and sinews of the attendant are also clearly visible. A devotee with his palms folded in *añjali-mudrā* has been shown to the right of the lotus pedestal.

There is yet another equally interesting image, rather even more than the preceding one, under the possession of Mahashaya P. N. Ghosh of Bhagalpur.[1] Installed in the private family temple of Mahashaya Ghosh, the sculpture representing Bhairava is given regularly a ceremonious bath, painted with colours, vermilion and sandal paste, draped by fine textured silk cloth and worshipped daily with due devotion. It appears more or less a lithic copy of the Pāla sculpture just discussed, the two tallying in their minute details. The sculpture represents the deity standing in the *tribhaṅga* pose with a skull-cup and a trident in his right and left hands respectively. He is also characterised by a flabby belly, large rolling eyes, plaited moustaches and beards, mark of the third eye over the forehead, a human skull tucked into the headgear, flames rising above the head in the form of a *maṇḍala* and a garland of large skulls. This image, on account of the absence of the stela and also on account of the general heaviness of the style, can be dated around c. 13th-14th century A D., when the artistic style in general marked considerable decline.

There is a very interesting sculpture of Bhairava in the Gaya Museum (Fig. 11) which belongs to the Pāla period.[2] The sculpture represents the ten armed deity facing to front on a full blown lotus resting on the back of a human figure crouching below on the pedestal. The sculpture is not an ordinary representation of Bhairava. The piece is rather more individualised by the manner in which the god is

1. *JBRS*, LXI, 1975, pp. 67-69, pls. II and III,
2. *Dr. Satkari Mookerji Felicitation Volume*, pp. 286-90.

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depicted on a fully expanded lotus placed over the back of the crouching human figure. The point becomes quite clear from the manner in which his legs have been exhibited. Both the legs of the deity are distended sideways with the right foot planted and the left one raised in such a way that only its toes touch the lotus. Such stepping of dances are found represented not only in the dancing images of Śiva; but also the images of various other deities. It is, however, a fact that the dancing images of the god, besides the movement of the legs, also reveal simultaneous movement of other limbs. Particularly the dancing aspect of the figure is emphasised by the movement of the hands, which is conspicuous by its absence in the present specimen. But the god is shown dancing very lightly in the Gaya Museum sculpture. It is not the cosmic dance of Śiva that the sculpture has aimed at in the representation of Bhairava. Like the dancing images of Śiva at the British Museum, London,[1] showing the god holding up over his head a pair of cobras in order to balance the body during the dance, the present sculpture also shows heavy whip-like object passing over the head of the deity and held in the two uppermost raised hands in identical manner evidently with the same purpose. It is thus not a vigorous dance of Śiva, not his *tāṇḍava-nṛtta*, which has been given a visulal form in the pesent piece; but the dance of a Yogin dancing lightly on the back of the Apsamārapuruṣa with innate peace and deep calm reflected on the smiling face of Bhairava. The crouching figure below also shares in the deep repose of the god with a free and frank smile which lits up his face.

The deity is holding up a long heavy whip-like object over his head. In his second right hand, he holds a sword (*khaḍga*), in the third right hand a cup made of human skull, while in the fourth and the fiifth right hands, he grasps a trident just below its three prongs with a severed human head balanced over it and a battle-axe by its handle respectively. In the second left hand, he carries a *khaṭvaṅga* (of which the human head attached to its upper end is entirely smashed). In the third left hand, he holds a rosary, while he holds a shield and

1. Chanda, R.P., *Mediaeval Indian Sculpture in the British Museum*, pl. XXIII

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a kettle-drum in the fourth and fifth left hands. The god has hideous looking face with parted lips and staring eyes rolling in the sockets. He has also a third eye over the forehead. His hair gathered over the head is arranged into a massive *jaṭā*. He puts on a *yajñopavīta* decorated with a snake near the chest and a garland of two bands showing human skulls interwoven into it at regular intervals. He also puts on a tiger-skin secured in position by a waist-band, through which his membrum virile standing quite erect is visible. The head of the stout dog is carved in the lower left field of the stela just above one of the folded legs of the human figure crouching below. Two miniature figures, a male and a female, evidently of the devotee couple, the former offering prayer and pouring down something into an earthen jar before him and the latter playing on cymbals with enthusiam, are shown seated above the crouching figure on the either side of the deity.

At Balia in the district of Darbhanga, there is a somewhat damaged stone sculpture of Bhairava,[1] locally known as Rudra Bhairava, with the proper right hand of the god completely broken and the object held in it partially d maged with its upper portion gone. The deity has been rendered somewhat dwarf in appearance. It is a two-armed figure of Bhairava, characterised by a flabby belly, protruding eyes, beard, canine teeth, ornaments of snakes, garland of skulls with flames of fire coming out of the hair, all these features being suggestive of the fierce aspect of the deity. On the ground of style, the image may be placed in the 10th-11th century A.D.

Recently an image of Bhairava of comparable date has been obtained in course of archaeological excavation at Antichak (Fig. 12) a village in the district of Bhagalpur, supposed to be the most probable site of the Vikramaśīla monastery,[2] The four-armed flabby-bellied deity is holding a *kartri* in his upper right hand, a *kapāla* in the lower right hand, severed human heads in the upper left and a

1. Mishra, V. K., *Mithila Art and Architecture*, fig. 43.
2. JBPP, Vol. II, 1978, p. 160, pl. XIX. 1.

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triśūla in the lower left hand. He is wearing elaborate ornaments and the *muṛḍamāla*. Two female attendants stand on the either side of the deity, and a devotee with folded hands is shown on the left side of the pedestal.

Some time in 1964 a very interesting image was found from the bed of the river Barakar situated at a distance of about 50 kms. from Dhanbad.[1] Presently preserved in the museum at Patna, the sculpture presents a four-armed male deity standing within a trefoil niche with the *śikhara* and the *kalaśa* of a temple forming a canopy over it. The four-armed god standing to front in the abhaṅga pose puts on a cupola-like headdress to which creeper-like objects are attached on both the sides. Somewhat bulging eyes cast downwards, prominent nose, bushy eyebrows, wide mouth and deep moustaches render the appearance of the deity terrific. His all the four hands are adorned with armlets and bangles. He holds a sword and an arrow in the left and a bow and a long trident in the right hands respectively. His body displays a number of ornaments including necklace of three different sizes and heavy pendants in the ears. The lower garment of the God resembles very much with the Burmese *toongi* coming down a little above the knees with decorated flap. A long ribbon (*udara-bandha*) is tied above his navel portion, the knot of which is clearly discernible. The principal figure is attended upon by two male persons whose miniature figures are shown standing on his either side. The two attendant figures resemble greatly with the main figure with the only difference that whereas the main figure is endowed with four hands, the attendants have each only two arms. The attendant to the right of the deity is holding a sword and a trident, while the attendant to his left is holding a sword and a shield. The presence of the bow and the arrow in the hands of the god makes his identification somewhat enigmatic. But there can be hardly any doubt as to the Śaivite character of the deity which is fully established by the presence of the trident in his front left hand. The presence of the trident in the

1. *JBRS*, Vol. L, pl. II.

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hand of the god along with his having been rendered terrific in appearance may make it more than probable that the deity represented is no other than Bhairava himself. There is, however, no representation of his mount the dog, nor is there even the garland of skulls worn by him. The attendants on his either side are also of śaivite character as one of them too has been shown carrying a trident. Stylistically, the image may be assigned to the 14th-15th century A.D.

ANDHAKĀSURAVADHA-MŪRTTI :—

There is an interesting image representing the subduing of the demon Andhakāsura on a stone boulder on the Mandara hill, an offshoot of the Vindhyas. The *Śiva Mahā-purāṇa*[1] narrates the story leading to the circumstances which prompted Śiva to kill the demon. The demon Andhakāsura had obtained several boons from Brahmā and had started harassing the gods. The gods, therefore, went to Śiva for help. In the meantime the arrogant demon went to the Kailāśa mountain to abduct Pārvatī by force. Naturally this infuriated Śiva who decided to kill the demon. Meanwhile another demon named Nīla came secretly in an elephant's form to kill Śiva. Vīrabhadra slew the demon and presented the elephant skin as a garment to Śiva. The god ornamented with serpents and clad in elephant's skin along with *gaṇas*, Viṣṇu and other gods went to combat with the demon. Viṣṇu and other gods, however, fled from the battle-field. Although Śiva had wounded the enemy with arrows but each drop of blood as it fell down on the earth multiplied into the duplicate copy of the demon. This made Śiva's job extremely difficult. Śiva thereupon created Chāmuṇḍā and the Saptamātṛkās. (Seven Divine Mothers) to drink up the blood. And Śiva, assuming the fierce aspect of Bhairava, killed him by his *triśula*, keeping him above the earth. He did not allow a single drop of blood to fall down on the earth, as in the other hand he carried a bowl of skull to collect the blood of the demon. The story of Andhakāsuravadha has very nicely been depicted in the sculptures carved in the Ellora and Elephanta caves.

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1. *Rudrasaṁhitā*, VV. 44-49 Adh,

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The Andhakāsuravadha image[1] represented on the Mandara hill, about 48 kms. south of Bhagalpur has three faces with pierced teeth, having ten hands with weapons in all of them. The image is represented extremely fierceful and terrific. One of the upper right hands of the figure is holding a skull, the second contains a *triśūla* and the third hand is shown having *khaṭaka* (shield), the fourth has a cup in which blood is probably trickling down and the fifth hand is holding a bow. The first upper left hand is shown holding probably a noose, the second has a *triśūla*, the third hand contains a hatchet, the fourth has an arrow, while the fifth hand has a battle-axe. Śiva is standing upon the body of a prostrate human figure who is holding an unidentified weapon in the right hand and his head resting on his left hand. The figure is wearing a garland of skulls. The figure of the demon, Andhakāsura, whom the god has killed, is shown balanced atop the *triśūla* to his left side and in order to destroy the duplicate copies of Andhakāsuras, Śiva created a goddess (*śakti*) named Yogeśvarī, out of the flame emerging from his mouth. The *śaktis* of the other gods such as Brahmāṇī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī and Chāmuṇḍā also joined war in the fulfilment of the task. Śiva thrust his trident in the body of the real Andhakāsura and Viṣṇu and other gods destroyed the false ones. This brought an end with the demon Andhakāsura.

NAṬARĀJA ŚIVA :—

Śiva, the Mahāyogī, is also Naṭarāja, the Lord of Dancers. The form of Śiva as Naṭarāja, Naṭeśa or Nṛtyeśvara was and still is a curious theme for devotees, religio-philosophic thinkers, artists, painters, poets and writers alike. Hardly any ancient culture of the world has such a popular and powerful master of dance as we have in the form of Śiva Naṭarāja. The dance of Śiva has cosmic force in it. Dancing is an act of creation. Through his frantic motions he generates the power of evolution, maintenance and dissolution of the world. In fact, in the form of Śiva Naṭarāja all his auspicious (*saumya*) and

1. *JBPP*, Vol. I, pp.187-91, pl. XXIV,

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inauspicious (*ugra* or *aśiva*) aspects are found mixed in one and the same image.

Like other parts of the country, his Nṛtya-mūrttis have also been found from Bihar Unfortunately they are few and far between so much so that they can be counted on the tips of the fingers.

E. B. Havell has given a very interesting story dealing with the circumstances which made Śiva dance. 'Once upon a time, Śiva disguised as a Yogī came to a forest hermitage to argue with certain Ṛṣīs who held heretical doctrines. He easily defeated them in argument, and they in a rage tried to destroy him by black magic, first by creating a fierce tiger in the sacrifical fire. Śiva seized it in its spring, stripped of its skin with the nail of his little finger and wrapped it as garment round his loins. Then they created a venomous serpent which Śiva took and wreathed as a garland round his neck and began to dance. Next an evil spirit shaped like an ugly dwarf rushed out of the fire. But Śiva crushed it under his foot, broke its back and then resumed his triumphant dance, the dance of cosmic rhythm, with all the Devas and all the Ṛṣīs as witnesses."

The *Bhārata Nāṭyaśāstra* mentions 108 different kinds of dance poses and in the *Śivāgamas* it is stated that Śiva danced in 108 modes. Though the *Śaivāgamas* mention 108 modes of Śiva's dances they actually describe only nine. One is that of Naṭarāja described in the *Aṁsumadbhedāgama*. The *Aṁśumadbhedāgama* describes the image of Naṭarāja as follows :

The deity should be sculptured with four arms, the front left hand should be held in *daṇḍahasta* or *gajahasta* pose across the body and the back left hand should carry fire either in a vessel, or upon the palm itself. The front right hand should be held in the *abhaya* pose. On the fore-arm of this hand, there should be *sarpa valaya*. The back right hand should carry a *damarū*. The right leg should be slightly bent and placed upon the back of the *Apsomārapuruṣa* and the knee should reach the *nābhisūtra*. The left leg should be lifted up, somewhat turned towards the right leg and kept across it. On the head

1. Havell. E.B., *The Himalayas in Indian Art*, pp.63-64.

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of Śiva, there should be *jaṭā-mukuṭa* decorated with flower garlands. The body of Śiva should be adorned with the *yajñopavīta*, a chest band and rings of fingers. The chest should be smeared with the saffron paste and the rest of the body with the ashes. The garment must be made of tiger skin.[1] Sarasvatī should be shown as playing on the *vīṇā*, and Indra on the flute; Brahmā making time by cymbals; Lakṣmī singing a song and Viṣṇu playing on a drum with all the gods standing around him.'"[2]

Śiva Naṭarāja, as a bare concept, goes back to pre-Gupta times,[3] though the early representations of Naṭarāja are hardly found prior to the Gupta period. A Naṭarāja image of the Gupta period has been found from the Maniyāra Maṭha at Rjgir. Bloch exposed some ten stuccos arranged in niches separated by pilasters around the base of the exterior of the circular structure. The images represent Hindu deities like Śiva-Liṅga Viṣṇu, Gaṇeśa, six figures of Nāgas and Nāgīs and a figure of dancing Śiva.[4] Śiva has been endowed with six arms.[5] Like other stucco figurines of Rajgir, this is as well assigned to the Gupta period. The left leg of the god is slightly raised in rhythmic action and the right leg is stretched bending at the knee. He wears neck ornaments (*ekāvali*) and armlets. The face of the god is unfortunately damaged. The figure is very delicately executed (Fig. 13).

The Archaeological section of the Gaya Museum, Gaya is in possession of a dancing image of Śiva (Fig. 14) discovered from Daftu (Gaya) which on stylistic ground can be dated in the Pāla period in c. 10th century A.D. Carved out of black basalt, the sculpture represents Śiva dancing on a bull. Nandī is gazing at the Lord in a joyous mood. Below the drum and cymbal players are also shown. The

1. Rao, T.A.G., *EHI*, Vol. II, pp 224-25.
2. *Ibid.*, p.233; Coomaraswamy, A.K., *The Dance of Śiva*, pp.83ff.
3. Tewari, S.P., *Hindu Iconography*, p 41.
4. Patil, D. R. *Antiquarian Remains in Bihar*, p.442., Sinha, C.P., *Natarāja in the Art of Bihar*, *JBPP*, III. fig.1.
5. Asher, Frederick, M, *The Art of Eastern India*, Plate 19.

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headless deity wears neck ornaments, armlets, waist girdle and *yajño-pavīta*. He has eight hands. The front two hands are depicted in movements. The lower left hand touches chin of Pārvatī who has been represented standing on her *vāhana* on the left side of the Lord. The objects in other two left hands are not very clear. The three right hands are unfortunately broken. The artist has succeeded in his mission of portraying the god actually performing the dance.[1]

There is another stone image[2] of Śiva in dancing pose discovered from the excavation at Antichak (Fig- 15). It has only four arms. He wears a *jaṭāmukuṭa*. His right raised up hand is holding something indistinct and the object in the left hand is a *damarū*. The god has no *vāhana*, nor is there any attendant. On stylistic ground the image of dancing Śiva may be dated in the 9th century A.D.

Mention may be made of another important Nṛtyamūrti of Śiva. It has not been represented independently rather it is carved on the top portion of a Pañchamukha liṅga, now in worship at the Dudheśvaranātha temple at Ranighat, Patna.[3] The Śiva liṅga has the figures of Brahmā, Gaṇeśa, Sarasvatī and Sūrya on its four sides, besides the Nṛtyamūrti of Śiva on the top portion mentioned earlier. Unfortunately the Nṛtyamurti of Śiva is badly damaged. The four handed Siva is represented against the background of a full bloomed lotus. All the four hands are upraised and scattered. Śiva is dancing on the bull which is shown under the legs of Śiva. No other divinities are depicted probably for want of sufficient space. On the basis of inscription and style of the image this dancing figure can be placed in the 9th-10th century A.D.

There is a reference to the Tāṇḍava dance of Śiva in the benedictory verse of the Sone East Bank Copper Plate of Indradhavala and Udayaraja dated 1197 A.D.[4]

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1. *JBPP*, III, Fig. 4.
2. *Ibid.*, fig. 2.
3. *JBPP*, I, pl. XIX, fig. E.
4. *EI*, XXIII, pp. 222-30.

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DAKṢIṆĀMURTTI OF ŚIVA :—

Śiva is regarded as the master of *yoga*, music and other sciences, and his sculptural representations of this aspect is known as the Dakṣiṇāmūrtti of Śiva. There is an interesting account furnishing explanation regarding the etymology of this name, according to which Śiva, while seated facing towards the south, taught the Ṛṣīs *yoga* and *jñāna* and as such, Śiva's images representing this aspect came to be known as his Dakṣiṇāmūrtti. It is symbolic of his four different aspects, as a teacher of *yoga*, of *vīnā*, of *jñāna* and as an expounder of other Śāstras which are represented by the Yoga-Dakṣiṇāmūrtti, Vīṇādhara-Dakṣiṇāmūrti, Jñāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrtti and Vyākhyāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrtti respectively.[1]

From Bihar have been obtained at least two images of Śiva representing him in his Dakṣiṇāmūrtti aspect, one of them being of the Vyākhyāna variety and the other of the vīnādhara variety. In accordance with the cannonical texts, the Vyākhyāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrtti of Śiva should represent the deity as seated in *vīrāsana* under a banyan tree, on a seat or on a white lotus. He should be provided with three eyes and four arms with the front right hand held in the *samdarśana-mudrā* and the front left hand being displayed either in the *varada-mudrā* or stretched straight in the *daṇḍa-hasta* pose with the elbow resting upon the left knee in the latter posture. The back right hand of the god should hold the rosary, while the back left hand should carry either fire or a snake. According to the Āgamic texts, one of the left hands may be shown either in the *varda-mudrā* or *daṇḍa hasta mudrā*, if it is in the former it might keep a book, the other left hand holding a snake, fire or a lotus. The different limbs of Śiva's body should be without any bend. The coiffure of the god should be arranged into *jaṭāmukuṭa* or *jaṭāmaṇḍala* or his *jaṭā* might be held together with a *paṭṭabandha* and adorned with the flowers of *durdurā* (*dhaturā*) and other wild plants, and also with a serpent and the crescent moon. In the middle of the *jaṭābhara* Gaṅgā should

1. Rao, T.A.G., *EHI*, II, i, pp. 273-74.

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be visible. The sculpture be adorned with the ornaments befitting the god.

A very remarkable stone panel belonging to the Temple Site No. 2 at Nalanda, datable in the post-Gupta period, appears to be representing the Vyākhyāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrtti of Śiva.[1] The two armed Śiva has been represented as an ascetic with his hair arranged in a coil with a skin scarf. Seated on a rock, he is shown with the right hand in the attitude of exposition (*samdarśana-mudrā*) and the left hand holding a book. The figure may, therefore, be taken as that of Śiva imparting knowledge. In front of him is seated a male figure holding a stylus in his right hand and parchment leaves in the left hand. From the facial rendering of the figure, it appears that the former is expounding something which the latter is noting down.

In accordance with the *Aṁśumadbhedāgama*, the Vīnādhara-Dakṣiṇāmūrtti of Śiva should have the left leg kept in the *utakuṭikāsana* and the two front hands of the god should hold the *vīnā*, the rest being similar to the Vyākhyāna-Dakṣiṇāmūrtti.[2] From Benisagar in the district of Singhbhum has been found a stone sculpture representing the Vīnādhara-Dakṣiṇàmūrtti of Śiva presently preserved in the Patna Museum.[3] Śiva has been shown seated in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose with the right leg pendent on a throne. He holds a *vīnā* in both his hands. He has a cap-like crown decorated with three peaks and jewels over his head with the locks of hair falling over his shoulders on either side. He puts on a beaded necklace, armlets, waist girdle and a *yajñopavita*. He also puts on a plaited *dhotī*, whereas the uppar part of his body is bare.

HARIHARA AND ARDHANĀRĪŚVARA :—

With a view to bridging the gap and bringing about religious rapprochement between the followers of the rival cults, composite

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1. Sinha, C.P., *Early Sculpture of Bihar*, p. 106, fig. 55; *JUPHS*, XXIII, p. 206, fig. 4.
2. Rao, T.A.G., *EHI*, II, i. pp. 289-90.
3. Gupta, P.L., *PMCA*, p.50, pl. X (PM. Arch. No. 61); Sinha, C. P., *op, cit.*, p. 106, fig. 56.

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images of the deities began to be prepared and worshipped from very early times. With this end in view, composite images of Harihara and Ardhanārīśvara were prepared and worshipped. The *Matsya Purāṇa*[1] describes in detail the composite image of Viṣṇu and Śiva (i. e. Harihara). On the basis of the coins, the earliest reperesentation of Harihara can be traced to the Kushan period on a coin of Huviṣka.[2] The theme has, however, been properly handled for the first time during the Gupta preiod. Works of the Mathura artists, preserved in the Mathura Museum, depict the left half of the deity as that of Viṣṇu and the right half that of Śiva in an elegant manner.[3] In Bihar, we find the composite figure of Harihara depicted on a Gupta seal discovered at Nalanda.[4] An inscribed jamb from the district of Rohtas, presently preserved in the Museum at Patna, has the figure of a four-armed Harihara, (Fig 16), which on the basis of the simplicity of the style and the transparency of the drapery, can legitimately be placed in the Gupta period.[5] The four-armed Harihara stands in the *samapādasthanaka* pose. He carries a cunch-shell in the front left hand and his back left hand is placed on the head of a kneeling figure whose palms are joined in supplication (*añjali-mudrā*). The front right hand is holding a rosary (*akṣamālā*), whereas the back right hand with the object held in it is broken. But the traces of the hand and the shaft of the weapon would suggest that the back right hand, somewhat raised, carried the trident (*triśūla*), the shaft of which is clearly visible on the right side. Bolow the front right hand is shown seated a pot-bellied Śiva-gaṇa. In the images, the two-halves of Hari and Hara are distinguished by the objects in the hands, the headgears, the attendants, the ornaments and the *vāhanas*. The right side is carved like that of Śiva, whereas the left side represents Viṣṇu. As such, the right side is distinguished by the

1. *Matsya Purāna*, chap. 260.
2. Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, pp.123-24, pl.IX, fig.17.
3. *JUPHS* (Old Series, 1932). p.18, figs. 223, p.146; *JBRS*, LI, p.91.
4. *MASI* No.66, pl. III. J3K.
5. Gupta, P.L., *PMCA*, p.48 (PM.Arch. No.6008); *Artibus Asiae*, XXV, fig.24.

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triśūla and the rosary in the right arms and a pot-bellied Śiva-gaṇa on the right side, whereas on the left side, there are a conch-shell and a slim bodied devotee. Likewise, the treatment of the headdress, in keeping with the character of the gods, is divided into two halves vertically, having matted locks of hair and high crown (*jaṭāmukuṭa* and *kirīṭamukuṭa*). The forehead also shows the third eye of Śiva and the *tilak* mark of Viṣṇu in contiguous to each other. On the left half is *vanamāla*, the characteristic flower garland of Viṣṇu. It may, however, be noted that besides the two kneeling attendants, there are no other subsidiary figures, nor even the vehicles of the two gods. Here, the important aspect is the *urdhvamedha* pose of the standing deity, and that enhances the grace of the particular relief.

A stone head from Kankarbagh, Patna, has been treated much in the similar fashion as in the Harihara image from the Rohtas district. It is also clearly divided into two halves. Whereas the right half of the head is treated in the fashion of the *jaṭamukuta*, the left half has been rendered as a high crown (*kiriṭamukuṭa*). Stylistically the stone head of Harihara from Kankarbagh, now preserved in the Patna Museum,[1] may be placed somewhat earlier than the Rohtas speeimen.

The worship of Harihara had gained considerable popularity during the early mediaeval period in Bihar. There is an exquisitely carved image of Harihara in the private collection of the Mahantha of Bodhgaya.[2] The sculpture, datable in c. 8th-9th century A. D. preserves all the essential iconographic features of Śiva and Viṣṇu in minute details. The four-armed god is holding a trident and a rosary in his right hands and a discus and a conch-shell in the left hand. The Śiva portion has a snake with its tail coiled into a circle adorning the side of the head, a human skull tucked into the middle of the bracelet and a loin-cloth of tiger-skin. The Viṣṇu portion is also

1. PM. Arch. No. 2695.
2. Desai, Kalpana, *Iconography of Viṣṇu*, p.53, fig.46. Sharma, B.N., *Pāla Sculptures from Bodhgaya, The Heritage of India*, 190, pp. IX, fig.5.

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distinguished by a *kirīṭamukuṭa*, a *vanamāla* hanging down the shoulder and a *pītāmbara* serving as the lower garment. The god is flanked by two male attendants, one on each side, while there is the bull (Nandī) on the proper right side facing the master, there is the human-faced Garuḍa on the proper left side.

Another highly interesting image from Bihar in the Indian Museum at Calcutta depicts the composite figure of Harihara, four-armed carrying a trident and a conchshell in the back hands and a skull-cup and a discus in the front hands.[1] The two halves of the principal figure are also emphasised by the treatment of the headgear, the ornaments, the long garland and the respective vehicles of Śiva and Viṣṇu. What renders the figure more interesting, rather unique, is that Sūrya standing on his seven-horsed chariot driven by Aruṇa and the Buddha on a double-petalled lotus are shown accompanying the god on his either side. There is neither any text mentioning Sūrya and the Buddha as the attendant deities of Harihara, nor have they been shown as mere attendants, for the manner in which separate sections of the pedestal have been allotted to them really suggests them to be cult objects of worship.[2] The sculpture thus demonstrates in a striking manner not only the combination of the Hindu deities Śiva and Viṣṇu and Sūrya; but also that of the Buddha with them. Combined representations of the Hindu and the Buddhist deities are not unknown as evidenced by the images of Śiva-Lokeśvara[3] and Sūrya-Lokeśvara.[4]

An image of Harihara of the Pāla period housed in a modern temple in the village Āntī of the Nawada district also displays practically similar features.[5] The four-armed deity is characteried by his

1. Banerjea, J. N., *DHI*, p.547, pl.XLVIII. 1; Jash, Pranabanada, *History of Śaivism*, pp.137-38.
2. Banerjea, *DHI*, p. 547.
3. *Ibid.*, pl. XLVI. 4.
4. *Ibid.*, pl. XLVIII.3.
5. Sahai, B., *Iconography of Minor Hindu and Buddhist Deities*, p,138.

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head-dress which is composed of the *jaṭā* and *kirīṭa-muknṭa*. The deity is holding a trident and a rosary in the right hands and a discus and a conchshell in the left hands. There are also the figures of Nandin and Garuḍa carved on appropriate sides of the pedestal. The distinction is emphasised in the treatment of the *yajñopavīta* and the garland worn by the deity. There are also the figures of a pot-bellied Śiva-gaṇa and an attendant of Viṣṇu on the right and the left sides respectively.

In Harihara-chatrapura, a remote village near the Sonepur railway station in the district of Saran, there is a temple containing a stone *liṅga* belonging to the early mediaeval period.[1] It has some interesting features. On the *liṅga*, Hari (Viṣṇu) and Hara (Śiva) are represented side by side and not merged in one form as found in other icons. This shows first that here the deities are maintaining their separate entities, and the Harihara subsect here was of a slightly different type. Secondly, here the *liṅga* cannot be regarded as the phallic emblem, rather merely a black-red slab for containing the conception of the two deities. In this context, we may also note a small sculptural representation found from Bihar, now preserved in the Indian Museum at Calcutta. The interesting feature of this image is that the right portion of the image is emphasised by the *ūrdhva-liṅga* sign which is not always present in such images. This reminds us of the Purāṇic account according to which Śiva fell in love with Viṣṇu in the form of Mohinī. The left side is thus identical with Mohinī, the beautiful female form assumed by Viṣṇu while distributing *amṛta* (ambrosia) churned out of the ocean by the Devas and the Asuras, This indicates not only the gradual merging of the Śaiva and the Vaiṣṇava sects, but also the close affinity of these sects to that of the Śāktas.

ARDHANĀRĪŚVARA ;—

Ardhanārīśvara is one of the most interesting aspects of Śiva in which Śiva (Īśvara) is half (*ardha*) woman (*nārī*). In the images

1. Jash,P., *op. cit.*, pp.136-37 (The Liṅga was the god himself—*Liṅgam sakṣād Maheśvara, Ibid.*, p.137).

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of Ardhanārīśvara, Śiva and Śakti are invariably shown combined together into one composite whole. It may be noted that the Ardhanārīśvara form may be regarded as the composite aspect of *liṅga* and *yoṇī*, Pārvatī representing the *Yonī* and Śiva the *liṅga*, the union of the two having created the world.[1] The goddess is the supreme power of the transcendent creator.[2] Thus, according to V.S. Agrawala, "the Purāṇa writers dilate on the Ardhanārīśvara Śiva comprised of the half-male and half-female aspects giving to it a metaphysical exposition as well as on inconographic formulation."[3]

There are certain Purānic legends which explain the circumstances leading to the fusion of Śiva and Śakti into one unite. The *Śiva Purāṇa*[4] gives an interesting story, according to which Brahmā having forgotten to create females, was distressed at the slow progress of the creation, and as such he contemplated upon Maheśvara (Śiva), who in turn appeared before him in androgynous form, divided into the male and the female halves and offered him the female half to copy. The *Liṅga Purāṇa*[5] also states that Brahmā finding himself unable to increase the number of the people in the world, underwent penace to please Śiva for the multiplication of the generation. Śiva, being pleased, shot forth from the centre of Brahmā's forehead and, pronouncing himself to be his son, immediately became a combination of the male and the female. In this Ardhanārīśvara form, Śiva burnt the whole creation including even Brahmā and enjoyed the company of his better half through mediation (*yogamārga*) for the multiplication of the people in the world. Even Bṛhmā and Viṣṇu were produced from this divine union. Elliot,[6] therefore, remarks : "As presiding over procreation, he is Ardhanārīśvara." That the

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1. *Liṅga Purāṇa*, (ed, Ram Sarma Acharya), II, adhyaya 66, Ślokas 6-7.
2. *Śiva Purāṇa, Vayavīya Saṁhitā* (ed. P. Tarakaratna), ch.15.
3. Agrawala, V. S., *Śiva Mahādeva, the Great God Śiva*, p.48.
4. *Śiva Purāṇa*, 3.3.2.8.7 *(Pūrvābhāg)*. 15.1.9.
5. *Liṅga Purāṇa, Pūrvārdha*, 41, vv, 7-12.
6. Elliot, C., *Hinduism and Buddhism*, II, p.145.

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male and the female principles are inseparable and ever found together in the cosmic evolution seems to be the real import of the Ardhanārīśvara form.[1]

The *Skanda Purāṇa*[2] states that "Brahmā asked Rudra to divide himself; the latter divided himself into the male and the female forms." At another place, the same Purāṇa[3] states that on the occasion Pārvatī said, "Let me reside with you all the while embrassing you limb by limb." Thus, the form of Śiva became androgynous.

On one occasion the Devas and the Ṛṣīs circumambulated Śiva and Pārvatī on the Kailāśa mountain but Ṛṣi Bhṛngī being an exclusive worshipper of Śiva went round the god of his choice alone and did not pay any homage to Pārvatī. At this neglect and insult, Pārvatī became very angry and so she reduced the sage to the state of skeleton so much so that Ṛṣī Bhṛngī was unable to stand erect on his two skiny legs. Only Śiva, however, took pity on him and provided him with a third leg. Bhṛngī was pleased by this act of Śiva. But to save Pārvatī's honour, Śiva united his body with his consort's in order that Bhṛngī would be compelled to pay homage to the goddess, while paying his respect to him. This was the Ardhanārīśvara form assumed by Śiva.[4] As such, Ardhanārīśvara, which emphasises in a characteristic way the union of the principal cult deities of Śaivism and Śāktiam, is an attempt to bring about reconciliation between the followers of the two rival sects – the Śaivas and the Śāktas.

Another interesting episode regarding the amalgamation of Śiva and Gaurī into one body is found in the *Kālikā Purāṇa*.[5] It is stated that one day Gaurī's form was reflected on the crystal like breast of

1. Nagaswamy, R., *Transactions of the Arch. Survey of South India*, Madzas, 1960, pp.109-114. (cf. Kalidasa : *Jagatah Pitrau Van, Parvati Parameśvaranm.*
2. Jash, Pl, *op. cit.*, p.161.
3. *Skanda Purāṇa*, 47, 54 ff.
4. Rao, T.A.G., *AHI*, II, i, pp.322-23.
5. *Kālikā Purāṇa*, ch. 45.

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Śiva. The jealous wife mistook the reflection to be that of another and more favoured woman, and a conjugal conflict occurred; when amiable relations were restored, the goddess expressed the desire to be so united with her lord as to leave no possibility of the recurrence of a feeling of separation. They, accordingly, allowed their bodies to be half-fused into each other and thus was created the united form of Ardhanārīśvara.

Referring to the images of Ardhanārīśvara, the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* simply mentions that the left half of Śiva should consist of the daughter of the mountain (*Girisutārdham*).[1] So also the *Viṣṇudharmottara*[2] mentions that the left half of Śiva's body should be of Pārvatī, his beloved, and he should be four-armed, carrying rosary and trident in his right hands and mirror and lotus in the left. But it is the *Matsya Purāṇa*[3] which describes in greater details the composite image of Śiva and Pārvatī. The Ardhanārīśvara images are also treated in the *Kālikā Purāṇa*[4] and various Āgamas.[5]

The sculptural representations of Ardhanārīśvara have been found as early as the Kushan period in the art of Mathura. The Gupta artists have, however, handled the theme with an excellent perfection. The sculptural representations of the Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva are no doubt extremely rare in the state of Bihar; but whatever images have been obtained in the state they do suggest that this form of the god was revered by the people of the different parts of the state.

Representations of Ardhanārīśvara showing Śiva and Pārvatī blended together are found on certain seals from Bhita[6] and Basarh[7]

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1. *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*, ch.57,v.53.
2. *Viṣṇudharmottara*, Bk. III, chapter 55.
3. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 260.1-10.
4. *Kālikā Purāṇa*, ch. 47, 167-77.
5. Rao, T.A.G., *EHI*, II, i, pp. 323-26.
6. Majumdar, R.C., *Classsical Age*, p.453.
7. *ASIAR*, 1913-14, p.152, pl. L(no. 764).

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belonging to the Gupta period. The latter, discussed in greater detail by Banerjea,[1] shows the deity practically nude having the male and the female features in the two halves.

A much mutilated sculpture from the Muṇḍeśvarī temple in the Rohtas district represents Ardhanārīśvara standing to front with a slight bend at the waist on the side of the female half.[2] The sculpture is so much damaged that nothing remains of the attributes in the hands and of the headgear. The face is completly defaced. Only the crack at the left breast marks it out as the figure of Ardhanārīśvara. The left half of the waist is broad which adds charm and grace to it. A necklace (*ekāvali*) is seen on the left side, whereas a serpent decorates the right side. The waist is ornamented with a girdle, which is clearly visible on the left side of the image. The arm is also adorned with an armlet. As it may belongs to the Muṇḍeśvarī group of sculptures, it may be dated in the post-Gupta period.

Another figure from Sultanganj[3] has been dated, on the basis of its comparison with the Purapura image (Dacca) of much later period,[4] in the late Pāla period by A. K. Chaudhary. But stylistically, the sculpture seems to belong to the Gupta tradition and it may safely be placed in the post-Gupta epoch The figure, as it is, has four arms with a prominent breast on the left side. The front right hand of the male half carries a rosary (*akṣa-sūtra*), while the back right hand grasps a battle-axe trident. The front left hand of the female half has been folded and placed on the hip, and at the same time it is shown holding either a lotus or a mirror, whereas the lower left hand has some object which is though not fully clear, appears to

1. Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, pp. 181-82.
2. Preserved in the Patna Museum.
3. *JBRR*, LIV, p.228.
4. Bhattasali, N.K., *IBHDM*, pl.LII.

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be like a lotus. The deity has a halo behind the head, a *jaṭā* on the right side and properly groomed hair on the left side. An exceedingly well wrought necklace adorns the neck. The lower part of the body on the right half is draped from the waist to the knee only, but on the left half from the waist down below the knee. The hip and the pelvis on the left are represented prominently emphasising the female character of Umā. The prominent breast, the triple girdle, the armlet, the bangle and the anklet can be seen on the left side of the image. The right side has also some trace of a *yajñopavīta*.

A fully preserved terracotta plaque from the Stūpa mound at Antichak, the most probable site of the Vikramaśila Mahāvihāra in the district of Bhagalpur, represents a very interesting figure of Ardhanārīśvara.[1] The deity has been shown standing a bit turned and slightly bent towards the left. Endowed with four arms, the male and the female features of the deity are emphasised in the right and the left halves of the figure. The male half of the deity is having a kettle-drum in the lower right hand and a battle-axe trident in the upper right hand, while the feminine half is having a water vessel in the lower left hand; but the upper left hand, which is broken, may have, as is usually found, held a mirror. The right leg of Śiva has a lion-skin hanging over the right thigh, while the left leg of Pārvatī is covered with a *sārī* hanging down the ankle. Likewise, the right portion of the head has the hair done in a *jaṭā* adorned with a crescent and the left portion has the hair neatly brushed up and arranged in the form of a bun. On the forehead is half indicated the third perpendicular eye of Śiva, shown in contiguous with the half *tilaka* mark of the goddess. The feminine side of the face is made distinctly delicate and is also having a large circular ear-ornament. There is also a prominent breast on this side. The two halves of the figure are distinguished by appropriate ornaments. With the absence only of the two vehicles, bull and lion, the present figure of Ardhanārīśvara is a fully developed representation of the deity. (Fig. 17).

1. *JBRS*, LVII, 1971, pp.66-67, fig.10.

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LAKULĪŚA :–

The sect of Lakulīśa is a branch of the Pāśupata Śaivism, signifying its distinctiveness by ascribing the theory of incarnation to Śiva. This belief in the incarnation of Śiva is, however, not found among the other schools of Śaivism, e.g. the Mattamayūras or Kapālikas, Kālamukhas, Liṅgāyatas, ete. The *Laghybhāgavatamṛta* mentions twentyfour incarnations of Viṣṇu. The Lakulīśa Pāśupatas attribute eighteen or twentyeight incarnation of Śiva having taken place in different ages. Lakulīśa is regarded as one of the incarnations of Śiva and according to the Vāyu[1] and the *Liṅga Purāṇas*[2] he is considered to be the twentyeighth incarnation. It is, however, difficult to determine the antiquity of the Lakulīśa Pāśupatya sect. As already referred to, the name of Lokulīśa or Lakulisā occurs as early a period when the *Vāyu Purāṅa* was composed. The *Liṅga Purāṇa* represents Maheśvara having told Brahmā that at the time of Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyaṇa during the twentyeight repetition of the Yugas, he would incarnate himself as a Brahmachārin by the name of Lakulīśa. R.G. Bhandarkar is, therefore, of opinion that if the *Vāyu purāṇa* was composed in the fourth century A.D , the incarnation of Śiva as Lakulīśa must be placed in the first century A.D. at the latest.

So far only one image of Lakulīśa obtained from Benisagar in the district of Singhbhum was known to us.[3] In Benisagar have been found ruins of a Śaiva temple and the images belonging to the 9th-10th centuries A.D. Probably Beglar[4] has referred to the very image of Lakulīśa from Benisagar. But he was not able to identify it. K.C. Panigrahi[5] has discussed in detail this image of Lakuliśa along with the other images from Benisagar. According to him, the image may

1. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, ch. 23. 221.
2. *Liṅga Purāṇa*, ch, 24.129.
3. *JBRS*, XLII, p, 7.
4. *ASR* (Cunningham), XIII, p.17.
5. *JBRS*, XLII, fig. 4.

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be placed in the 10th-11th century A.D. But Winer[1] has suggested that it may be placed in the 7th century A.D. On consideration of the style of the art, it will be proper to place the image in the post-Gupta period.[2] Its facial features, formation of its lips and the appearance of the spirituality are some such Gupta features that this particular image may be regarded as that of the post-Gupta period. Lakulīśa has the head and ears located as that of the Buddha. Ears are elongated, and as in the case of the Buddha figures, he has top-knot over the head. Recently some fortyfive images and a few architectural pieces from Muṇḍeśvarī in the district of Rohtas have been obtained for the Patna Museum. One of the architectural pieces containing the representation of Chaitya Window has within it the figure of Lakulīśa holding a staff in his hand. In this sculpture as well like the Benisagar figure, Lakulīśa has been represented in the *Vyākhyāna-mudrā* along with a staff which is being supported on the right shoulder. He has drooping eyes and benevolent face. The two legs are tied by a *Yogapaṭṭa*. In the Muṇḍeśvarī sculpture Lakulīśa has been represented alone by himself. He is not accompanied by any disciples. In the Benisagar image, the deity has been shown in the company of his four disciples. Though on account of its mutilated condition, the figure of only one disciple is preserved. Both the figures are endowed with two arms only, although four armed figures of Lakulīśa are not unknown from other places such as from Rajasthan and Orissa. Being part and parcel of the Muṇḍeśvarī temple, the image can be dated in the post-Gupta period.

A well preserved and highly remarkable image of Lakulīśa discovered from Utren Pali is preserved in the Gaya Museum, Gaya (Fig. 18). Shown seated in the *padmāsana* over a full bloomed double petalled lotus, the god is ithyphallus. He is two armed with the special symbol the club placed perpendicularly on the palm of the right hand placed over the right thigh. He is holding a somewhat rounded objeet in his left hand placed over the knee on the left side. His four disciples are shown seated at the four corners of the

1. *Artibus Asias*, vol. XXV, p. 175.
2. *Bharati*, Nos. 12-14, pp. 249-50.

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stela. A highly conventional figure of the bull occupies a miniature lotus on the lower portion of the stela just below the lotus pedestal over which Lakulīśā has been shown seated. The upper portion of the stela, somewhat rounded, is decorated with flowery patterns and auspicious symbols. On stylistic ground, it may be placed in circa 10th century A.D.

Of approximately the same date is another image of Lakulīśa (Fig. 19) from the village Pali near Koñch in the district of Gaya, presently housed in the Gaya Museum. Unfortunately the image is somewhat damaged and the face of the deity is completely smashed. However, this image must have baen highly attractive when completely intact. The deity has been rendered seated in somewhat *ardha-paryańka* pose on a double petalled lotus with the right leg pendent and placed on a miniature lotus and the left leg folded and placed on the seat. He is holding a somewhat round object on his right hand, while he is carrying the club by his left hand which is balanced on his left thigh. The deity puts on a number of ornaments in this sculpture as well Lakulīśa has been shown accompanied by his four disciples.

From Antichak as well has been obtained a black basalt image of Lakulīśa. The sculpture has been rendered as a stela somewhat conical at the top. The deity sits cross-legged with his both the knees tied by means of *yogapaṭṭa*. He is holding his club by his both the hands balancing it over his both the thighs. His facial feature resumbles with that of the Buddha and he has cranial bump over the head. The flying Gandharvas as well as Gajaśārdula designs are shown on both the sides. The sculpture is somewhat unfinished as is apparent from the chisel marks throughout the sculpture. Had it been finished it must have been a highly remarkable piece. Stylistically the sculpture may be dated in circa 12th century A.D.

GODDESS PĀRVATĪ :—

Goddess Pārvatī also known variously as Umā, Satī, Chaṇḍī, Durgā, etc., is intimately associated with Lord Śiva as his consort. She is a goddess extremely popular amongst the married Hindu

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women, for her worship is believed to safeguard the fortune (*saubhāgya*) of women. She is found represented in sculptures very often in association with her lord, as already seen, the figures in close embrace of Lord Śiva in Umā-Maheśvara images. She has also been rendered as being accepted as wife by lord Śiva in the Kalyāna-sundara images representing the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī. She is also part and parcel of the physical existence of lord in his Ardhanārīśvara form. As already seen above, images representing Umā-Maheśvara, the Kalyānasundara aspect and the Ardhanārīśvara form have been found from a number of places in the State of Bihar, attesting to the wide popularity Lord Śiva has been enjoying amongst the general populace of the state. At the same time, individual images of Pārvatī, the consort of Śiva, unaccompanined by her lord are obtained from a number of places within the State. Wherever she is depicted alone, she has her usual symbol i.e. a mirror and a trident in place of a lotus However, no such images of Pārvatī prior to the Gupta period are known to us The earliest image belongs to the late Gupta period which comes from Muṇḍeśvarī in the district of Rohtas.[1] The goddess is shown standing to front on a plain pedestal. She is four-armed. She puts on a *sārī*, the upper part of her body being bare. Her hair is arranged into a *jaṭā* with a *liṅga* like decoration above. Her front right hand has been exhibited in the *varda-mudrā*, whereas her back right hand raised up carries a rosary (*akṣamālā*). The back left hand similarly held up has a longish object which appears like a hatchet. The front left hand has a vessel of nectar. To her right is a human bodied lion. To her left is a banana plant with figures of two deers in front. The sculpture is carved out of buff sandstone.(Fig. 20).

Another image which also comes from the same place represents the goddess carved in a pillar alongwith Sūrya, Śiva and Harihar. It is also preserved in the Patna Museum and may be dated in the 6th century A.D.

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1. *Artibus Asia,* XXV, flg.16, (Patna Museum Arch.No.6005).

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The image of Pārvatī discovered recently in the excavation at Antichak in the district of Bhagalpur is specially noteworthy. The four handed goddess with *jaṭābhāra* on her head stands in a plain pilastered niche below a mutilated pediment. The upper part of her body is unclad in contrast to the lower part draped with a lower garment secured with a waist band. She holds a twig in the upper left hand and a pot in the lower left hand. Her lower right hand is shown in the *varada-mudrā* and a sword (*khaḍga*) held in the upper right hand. Two trees with long leaves are clearly shown flanking the goddess on her lower side. The image[1] from Antichak is datable in circa 9th century A.D. A tenth century mutilated image of Pārvatī discovered at Gangapur (Patna), preserved now in the Patna Museum, shows her seated and endowed with sword and shield in upper right and left hands and a *triśūla* in the main left hand.[2] Another image of the goddess from Monghyr shows her having six hands, seated on a lion, holding shield and *triśūla* in her right hands and *chara* and *khaḍga* with her left hand.[3] A bronze figure of Pārvatī (Fig. 21) at Nalanda[4] shows her with three eyes, four hands holding a rosary, a hooked staff and a water vessel in three hands, riding on a lion, and a creeping iguena appears near her right leg. According to J. N. Banerjea,[5] *naivedya* (offering) pots are shown on the four corners of the pedestal and the sun and the moon are placed on either side of the very beautiful and elaborately designed *śiraschakra*. But R.D. Trivedi thinks that the objects on four corners of the pedestal described by Banerjea as heaped *naivedya* (offering) pots, actually represent the four burning fires which, added to the Sun, go to make five fires as required in the *pañchatapas*.[6] This bronze figure in question represents Pārvatī in *Pañchatapas* with her *godhāsaṇa* (having an alligator as her mount) aspect added to it.

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1. *Indian Archaeology*—A Review 1975-76, p.7, pl.7A.
2. *PMCA*, p.72, Patna Museum Arch. No. 676.
3. *Ibid.*, pp.72-73.
4. Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, pl. XLIII, fig. 2.
5. *Ibid.*, p.501.
6. Trivedi, R.D., *Iconography of Pārvatī*, pp.66-67.

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Another metal image of Pārvatī from Bihar is preserved in the collection of the Bangīya Sāhitya Parishad.[1] It is dedicated in the 54th years of the reign of the Pāla ruler Nārāyaṇapāla. Mention may also be made of an image of Pārvatī dedicated in the 3rd year of the reign of the pālā ruler Madanapāla. It is now displayed in the Patna Museum, Patna.[2] Unfortunately the head of the goddess is broken.

The Patna Museum has recently acquired some stone sculptures and other objects from S.V. Sohoni. Goddess Pārvatī is also represented by two images,[3] one in grey stone and the other in black-basalt. The former shows the goddess four armed holding a trident in the front left hand and a sword and a shield in the back hand, the object held in the front right hand being indistinct. The other image is, however, much damaged. Not only the upper right side of the stele is broken, even the faee and the left hands of the goddess are damaged- The mount of the goddess, the lion, is shown near her left leg, besides another horned animal (not identified) on the right side. Both the images of Pārvatī are datable in the 9th-10th century A.D.

There are two images[4] of Pārvatī (represented in the guise o Durgā) in the Patna Museum. Both of them are almost similarly treated. Unfortunately the findspot of both the images are unknown. Both the images represent the goddess seated in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose with the right leg pendent and the left one folded and placed on the seat, there being the figure of the lion, the *vāhana* of the goddess just below the seat of the goddess. The goddess has been rendered four armed, displaying *varada mudrā* by her front hand and carrying a sword by her back right hand and a shield by her back left hand, she is supporting a child seated on her lap by her front left hand, emphasising her mother aspect as well. Both the images are carved out of black basalt and may be dated in 10th-11th century A.D.

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1. *Indian Antiquary*, XLVII, 1918, p.110.
2. Banerjea, R.D., *EISMS*, p. 23, pl.VI. b.
3. *JBPP*, III, pp. 298-299:
4. Patna Museum Arch. Nos. 6369 and 1083.

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A beautiful standing image of Pārvatī has been found from Girijāsthāna, Phulshara. The deity has four hands. The upper right hand is holding a Śiva liṅga and the lower one fruit. The upper left hand has a mirror, whereas the lower one rests on the head of Kārttikeya. To her right is a figure of Gaṇeśa. The *sārī* has been shown with the help of ripple-like folds. Alligator (mangoose ?) is shown at the bottom of the pedestal. The image may be dated in the 11th century A.D.

Two images of Māheśvarī, the female counter part of Māheśvara or Śiva have been obtained from Pachar in the district of Gaya and Seraikela in the district of Singhbhum. Māheśvarī from Pachar is represented as seated in *ardhaparyaṅka* pose with the right leg pendent and the left one folded and placed on the seat. The two-armed goddess holds a spear in her left hand and displays *varada-mudrā* by her right hand. Her *vāhana*, the bull, is shown below her seat facing towards the right.[1] The two armed Māheśvarī[2] from Seraikela is carrying a trident in her right hand and by her left hand she is embracing sportively the child who is touching her necklace. Her bull facing to the right is carved on the pedestal. The goddess has *jaṭā-mukuṭa* and circular ear-rings. The flowery curly ends of the hair on the two sides of the head are beautifully rendered.

GAṆEŚA :–

Gaṇeśa is undoubtely one of the most important deities of the Hindus. No function or worship of a god is regarded to have been properly performed unless it is preceded by the worship of Gaṇeśa. He is the son of Śiva and Pārvatī and came to be worshipped as the god of wisdom, wealth and success. He has several epithets, such as Vakratuṇḍa, Ekadanta, Hastimukha, Lambodara and Vighnavi-

1. Mishra, V.K. *Mithila Art and Architecture*, p.,VII, fig.14.
   Mishra, V.K. *Cultural Heritage of Mithila*, pl.X, fig.16.
2. Patna Museum, Arch. No. 10816.
3. *JOI*, XVIII, fig.3.

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naśaka. He has, however, been pictured grimly in early literature. He has not been referred to in the *Ṛgveda*.[1] Gaṇesa is clearly mentioned along with Rudra and his consort for the first time in the *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra*,[2] and he is called Vināyaka in the *Atharvaśirṣa Upaniṣad*.[3] Described as the Gaṇa of Rudra, and also called Vināyaka, he has been conceived as a harmful or destructive agent in some of the *Gṛhya Sūtras*. In a few early Purāṇas, he continues to be painted as such. But even in some other Purāṇas, he appears to be assuming an independent status with a changed charactor. He no more remains a trouble monger, rather becomes the remover of all obstacles and bestower of success.[4]

The evolution of the images of Gaṇeśa can be traced from the Kushan period in the form of Gajānana-Yakṣamūrti.[5] A considerable number of figures of Gaṇeśa belonging to the Gupta period have been found from different parts of Bihar attesting to the popularity of the deity in the state. Gaṇeśa has been represented as sitting, standing and dancing. He has been usually represented either two or four armed. More often, he is shown seated with the left leg folded and placed on the seat, and the right leg also folded but shown raised up somewhat perpendicularly.

The figure of Gaṇeśa discovered from village Karian[6] in the district of Madhubani may be regarded as the earliest image of the god from Bihar. Here Gaṇeśa is seated on a pedestal made of coarse grained buff coloured sandstone. The *vāhana* of the

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1. The reference to *Brahmanaspati* in the Ṛgveda (11.23.1) and the *Atharvaveda* (VII. 31.1) as the Lord of all Brahma-Yakṣas Gaṇapati and the supreme king Jyaṣṭharāja, does not mean for Gaṇeśa.
2. *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra*, II, 5.6.
3. Bhandarkar, R.G. *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Other Minor Religious Systems*, p.147.
4. Yaduvanshi, *Śaivamata*, pp.50ff,122ff.
   Verma, B.S., *Socio-Religious, Economic and Literary Condition of Bihar*. pp.120ff.
5. Singh, Sheo Bahadur, *Brahmanical Icons in Northern India*, pp.136-37.
6. Roy, S.R., *Karian Excavations*, p.33, pl. XIV.

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god is conspicuous by its absence. The image is crudely executed. The halo is plain. All these features of this image place it in the late Kushan or early Gupta period. Three images[1] of Gaṇeśa are known from Benisagar in the district of Singhbhum belonging to the post-Gupta period. One of the images from Benisagar shows the god with radish in the right hand, whereas he has a *ratna-pātra* full of sweet balls on the palm of the left hand to which the god lustily applies the proboscis of his trunk curved gracefully to reach the bowl towards the left.[2] On the pedestal of the another image[3] has been carved a number of objects which are representations of fruits meant for offering to the elephant headed god With a view to emphasising the Śaiva affiliation of the god, he has a third eye on the front of the forehead (just like the third eye of Śiva). The left ear of the deity is, however, damaged.

The two armed figure from Kumrahar (Fig. 22) (Patna), has a sweet ball in the right hand instead of the radish, the left hand as usual holding the *ratna-pātra* of sweets.[4] The post-Gupta sculptures from Muṇḍeśvarī have figures of Gaṇeśa usually four armed, carrying a sweet balls in the front right hand, a *svadanta* in the back right hand and a bowl full of sweet balls in the front left hand with the proboscis of the elephant trunk applied to it.[5] Curiously enough these images of Gaṇeśa have invariably the back left hand broken which may have held a *kuṭhāra* (battle-exe). All these sculptures are of the seated variety.

A seated image of Gaṇeśa in the State Chandradhari Museum, Darbhanga, has also four arms with the bowl of sweet balls in the front hand.[6] In all these sculptures, datable in the Gupta or post-Gupta period, the figure of the mouse which is the *vāhana* of the god,

1. *Artibus Asiae*, XXV. figs. 26, 27 & 28.
2. *Ibid*, fig. 26.
3. *Ibid*, fig. 27.
4. Sinha, C.P., *op. cit.*, fig. 58.
5. *Ibid.*, fig. 59.
6. *Mithila Bharti*, 2 p.135 (figure on p.135).

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is conspicuous by its absence. Gaṇeśa has a serpent tied over the belly. As required by the texts his one of the tusks is broken, hence he is Ekadanta. A stucco figure of Gaṇeśa has been noticed on the cylindrical wall of the Maniyāramaṭha at Rajgir,[1] belonging to the Gupta period.

As compared to the Gupta age, the number of images of Gaṇeśa increased during the Pāla period. They are so abundant that they scarcely can be counted. This shows the popularity of the god in the later period. The stone sculptures of Gaṇeśa of the Pāla period in Bihar are generally carved out of black-basalt or *kasauṭī pathar*. Apart from stone sculptures, metal images of Gaṇeśa have also been found from Bihar,

The Patna Museum has as many as eight stone images of Gaṇeśa of the mediaeval period which represent him seated on lotus pedestal with one leg pendent.

The Patna Museum is in possession of image of Gaṇeśa[2] from Lakhisarai in the district of Monghyr. The god sits over a cushion in the *mahārājalīlā* pose with the figure of his mice shown represented in front. He is four armed, carrying rosary (*akṣamālā*) in the front right hand, a battle-axe in the back left hand and a pot of sweets in the front left hand to which the god has applied the proboscis of his elephant trunk. He is flabby bellied and his hair is decorated tastefully into a *jaṭā*. The image of Gaṇeśa is shown carved within a rectangular pediment. A Śiva liṅgā fixed over a double petalled lotus suggests thereby the Śāiva affiliation of Gaṇeśa. The sculpture may be dated in circa 9th century A.D.

A four handed image of Gaṇeśa seated in *lalitāsana* has been discovered from Antichak, Bhagalpur. The figure is princely ornamented. His hair is arranged in an elongated *jaṭāmukuṭa* style. The mouse, the *vāhana* of the god, is placed at the lower portion of

1. *MASI*, No. 58, p.14.
2. Patna Museum Arch. No.21,

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the throne. On the basis of its style, this image may be dated in the 10th-11th century A.D.[1]

A four-armed image of seated Gaṇeśa from Bihar is preserved in the Indian Museum at Calcutta.[2] Two of his hands hold a battle-axe and a lotus. One of the remaining hands carries a fruit, while the other rests on the right leg. The body is surrounded by a snake.

Bronze images of Gaṇeśa are known to have been obtained from a number of places in the State. From Fatehpur in the Gaya district,[3] Imadpur in the Vaiśālī district.[4] Chaṇḍipore in the Bhagalpur district,[5] Nalanda in the Nalanda district,[6] and Katghar Durgapur village in the Katihar district.[7] He is found in association of the bronze Śiva-liṅga from Belwa in the Saran district.[8]

In the Fatehpur hoard, Gaṇeśa (Fig. 23) has been seated in *lalitāsana* with the left leg folded and placed upon the seat and the right leg pendent. He is four armed. He carries his own tusk (*svadanta*) in the front left hand and a battle-axe (*paraśu*), in the back left hand. The object held in the back right hand being blurred, it is difficult to make anything out of it, though the traces faintly preserved may suggest it to be lotus flower. He is, however, carring the bowl of sweets in the front right hand to which the god has applied the proboscis of his elephant trunk, relishing the sweets in the pot to his heart's fill. As required by the canonical texts, he is pot bellied and has been putting on a sacred thread of a snake (*sarpa yajñopavīta*).[9]

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1. *JBPP*, Vol. II, p. 170, fig.5.
2. Bloch, T. *op. cit.*, p.89.
3. *JBPP*, I, 1977, p.185, fig.7,
4. *JBPP*, II, p.185.
5. *ASR* (Cunnigham), XVI. pp. 84ff.
6. Gupta, P.L., *op. cit*, p.123 (Patna Museum Arch.No. 8449).
7. Fifteen bronze images have been discovered along with image of Gaṇeśa & they are in the Bhagalpur Museum.
8. Gupta, P.L., *op. cit.* p.162 (Patna Museum. Arch. No. 2768).
9. *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*, Ch. 58, v 58; *Viṣṇudharmottara* III, 71. 13-16.

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His favourite vehicle, the mice shown crouching near his right pendent leg appears to be looking at its master reverentially.

The bronze image from Nalanda represents Gaṇeśa seated in the *ardhaparyaṅka* attitude on a lotus pedestal. The god is four armed, holding a battle-axe and a radish (*mūlaka*) in his right hands and a trident and a bowl of sweets in the left. His *vāhana*, the mice appears on the pedestal. On stylistic ground the image is assigned to circa 8th century A.D.[1] Gaṇeśa accompanying the group of the Mātṛkās in the image from Imadpur[2] is also four-armed and may be dated in the 9th century A.D. The deity is also found associated with the bronze Śiva-liṅga from Belwa in the Saran district. Sitting in an easy posture on a miniature lotus emerging from the drum over which the liṅga is fixed, Gaṇeśa has again been endowed with four arms. He is also charactrised by a flabby belly and a cranial bump over his head. The *vāhana* of the god is, however, absent.[3]

The dancing image of Gaṇeśa was first sculptured in the Gupta period in which the deity is two-armed, pot-bellied, having a single tusk and his proboscis turned to the left.[4] Dancing images of Gaṇeśa are not many from Bihar. They all belong to the Pāla period. The artists of Bihar prepared dancing images of Gaṇeśa having not only four arms, but also as many as six or eight arms. As a matter of fact, images of dancing Gaṇeśa from Bihar have all been endowed without fail with six or eight arms, where the deity has been represented as dancing independently. Four-armed images of dancing Gaṇeśa from Bihar are, however, noticed on the Pañchāyatana Śiva-liṅgas, where Gaṇeśa has been shown along with other cult deities occupying the other sides of the *liṅgas*.

An image of dancing Gaṇeśa has been discovered at village Birpur in the Begusarai district.[5] The deity has been shown dancing

1. Gupta, P.L., *PMCA*, p.125 (Arch. No.8448).
2. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (Latters) XVI, 1960, p.251.
3. Gupta, P.L., *op. cit.*, p. 162.
4. Mathura Museum No.1064.
5. *JBRS*, LVI, p.64.

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on the *saptaratha* pedestal with his right leg bent and placed on the pedestal and the left one also bent sideways touching it with the toes, suggestive of the leg being uplifted for the purpose of performing the dance. He has eight arms. While his front left hand is stretched straight slightly upward with the palm open, with the front right hand he is exhibiting the *abhaya-mudrā*. He is carrying his broken tusk (*svadanta*) in his lower right hand and a battle-axe (*kuṭhāra*) in another right hand, while he is holding an *aṅgulīya* in the back upraised right hand. In two of the back left hands, he is holding a radish and a full-blown lotus, while the third lower left hand has a pot of sweet balls which the god is relishing by applying to it the proboscis of his trunk curved towards it. The *vāhana* of the god, carved on the centre of the pedestal facing towards the right, has been looking up at the master performing the dance reverentially. There is a bunch of mangoes with leaves attached to the stalk hanging in the top centre of the stela. Such type of representations are usually found in dancing images of Gaṇeśa from Bengal. According to J.N. Banerjea the fruits are "most probably symbolical of fruits of success in any enterprise which is the result of the proper propiation of the god named the bestower of success (*Siddhidātā*)."[1]

Another highly attractive image of dancing Gaṇeśa hails from village Eksari (Fig. 24) under Ekma police station in the district of Saran. It is now preserved in the Patna Museum.[2] Possessed of six arms, his head is turned towards the right, while his trunk is turned towards the left as one of his left hands holds the bowl of the sweet balls. In two of his right hands, he holds the battle-axe and noose, while with the third he feels the stomach full of sweets. He is catching hold of a serpent twised into a coil with its expanded hood just above his fist by his upper left hand. He holds his own broken tusk in his main or front left hand. Gaṇeśa puts on a three tiered crown over his head and so also a snake *yajñopavīta* hanging from his left shoulder.

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1. Majumdar, R.C., (Ed.) : *History of Bengal*, I, pp.448.
2. Patna Museum Arch. No.10611.

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To his left are two female figures dancing with one of their hands on their breasts Gaṇeśa is also dancing pleasantly, and his big belly and highly ornate crown are worthy of note. His favourite mouse is also shown carved on the pedestal. The artist has succeeded in heightening the effect of the dance performed by the god. Above, there are two flying Gandharvas carrying garland and between them at the crest is a piece of flower like ornamentation.

An image in the Gaya Museum, Gaya, shows dancing Gaṇeśa with eight arms.[1] Unfortunately most of his arms are damaged and so also the proboscis of his trunk is broken. The sculpture represents the god as dancing on a double-petalled lotus pedestal with his vehicle, the mouse, shown depicted below the lotus facing towards the right. The deity, rendered dancing rather vigorously, is having three bends (*bhaṅgas*) in his body. The image has been discovered from Badrabad in the Jahanabad district. On consideration of its style, it may be dated in about the 9th-10th century A D. Another eight-armed dancing image of Gaṇeśa from Bihar is presently preserved in the Indian Museum at Calcutta.[2]

The image of Gaṇeśa from Bheet-Bhagwanpur[3] in the district of Darbhanga represents the god dancing with vigour on a double-petalled lotus. He is also eight-armed. His elephant trunk is lifted up towards the right which is a rare feature. The disposition of the number of his arms is also unique. The image is dated in circa 10th century A.D.

Dancing Gaṇeśa is also represented on the Pañchāyatna type of Śiva-liṅga from Adalatghat, Patna,[4] and also on the Pañchāyatna Śiva-liṅga in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.[5] The Adalatghat Śiva-liṅga

1. *JBPP*, II, p.232, pl. XXIV.
2. Bloch, T., *Supplementary Cat. of the Arch. Collection of the Indian Museum, Calcutta*, p.89.
3. Mishra, V.K., *Mithila Art and Architecture*, pp.30 & 37. Pl. X 120.
4. *JBRS*. LV., pp.122-127.
5. Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p.545, pl. XLVI., fig.2.

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exhibits the figures of the four cult deities Viṣṇu, Pārvati, Sūrya and Gaṇapati on the four sides of the central Śaiva emblem. The side of the Śiva-liṅga facing towards the north contains the figure of Gaṇeśa who is four-armed. He is depicted as dancing on the *pañcharatha* pedestal. The Pañchāyatana Śiva-liṅga from Bihar in the Indian Museum, Calcutta also exhibits the four cult deities Viṣṇu, Pārvatī, Sūrya and Gaṇeśa Gaṇeśa represented as dancing on one of its sides has considerable iconographic similarities with the dancing Gaṇeśa on the Adatat Ghat Pañchāyatna Śiva-liṅga.

In addition to these images of Gaṇeśa, there is a very interesting and rare figure of Gaṇeśānī of Vaināyakī (the female counterpart of Gaṇeśa) from Giriyak in the district of Nalanda, now preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.[1] (Fig. 25) Endowed with four arms, she has been shown seated cross-legged over a single petalled lotus seat having a beautifully decorated base. She has four hands carrying a club by her front right hand, a sweet ball in the back right hand, a battle-axe in her back left hand and a *conchshell* in her front left hand. Like Gaṇeśa, she puts on a *yajñopavīta* and her hair is arranged into a *jaṭā*. The image does-not have a big belly as has been noticed in the Gaṇeśa The crosslegged sitting posture is also quite unusual. The holding of the attributes like staff and conchshell and the absence of sweets are also the unique features in this image.

KĀRTTIKEYA :—

Kārttikeya is regarded as the eldest son of Śiva and Pārvatī.[2] Mythologically he is known as the god of war and generalissimo of the army of the gods against the forces of the demons to final victory. He is a deity of absorbing interest. It is interesting to note that the Gupta monarchs were though the followers of the Vaiṣṇava faith (*paramabhāgavata*), there is evidence to suggest that Kumārgupta I

1. Banerji, R.D., *EISMS*, p.117, (Indian Museum No.3919).
2. Karttikeya seems to have been conceived first as the offspring of Agni from Gaṅgā (Ramayana, 1.37). In the *Mahābhārata (Vanaparvan*, Ch. 229, vv. 15-19) he is reperesented as the son of Agni but born from his wife Svāhā.

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attached great importance to the god Kārttikeya. Not only did he bear the name Kumāra of the generalissimo of the army of the gods, his son Skandagupta was also named after him. Kumārgupta I also substituted the peacock for the Garuḍa symbol. He issued a special type of gold coin on which beautiful figures of Kārttikeya were carved. The Kārttikeya type of gold coins which was an innovation of his reign period, was obviously intended to be the numismatic homage to the deity after whom he was named.[1]

A number of stone images of Kārttikeya have been found from various parts of Bihar. There is an impressive stone sculpture of the Gupta period representing Kārttikeya in buff coloured sandstone which comes from Muṇḍeśvarī in the district of Rohtas.[2] It is presently preserved in the Museum at Patna. The sculpture, but for its biocronate head-dress, is similar in conception, rather bears a family likeness to the well know Kārttikeya image of the Bhārat Kalā Bhawan.[3] Riding his peacock and holding his spear in his left hand, the figure is rather a more simplified stone rendering of the god in which the right hand is simply held in the *varadamudrā* and the halo behind the head is quite plain. The peacock is, however, looking to the master with great devotion.[4] The *mayūrapṛṣṭhāśrayī* god has *kuṇḍalas* in the ears and typical necklace with *baghnakha* and *pādaka* pendents (Fig. 26).

From Muṇḍeśvarī also comes another figure of Kārttikeya in which the deity has been represented standing with his consort Kārttikeyānī standing to his left.[5] The right arm of the god is somewhat damaged. Kārttikeya has his typical chest ornament and the headdress. He has plain halo behind his head. The face of the

1. Altekar, A.S., *GGC*, BH, p. C1.
2. Gupta, P.L. *PMCA*, Pl. VIII, Shere, S.A., *Guide to the Archaeological Section of the Patna Museum*, p.8. pl. v. (Arch. No. 6003).
3. Diwakar, R.R. (Ed.) *Bihar Through the Ages*, Pl. VIII.1.
4. Sinha, B.P., *Bhāratīya Kalā Ko Bihāra Kī Dena*, p.12. Fig. 76.
5. *PMCA*, p.48, Parishad Patrika, year 10, Vol. 3, Fig. facing page 21, (Arch. No,6006).

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god is lit up with divine lustures, and the softness and the attractiveness of his physiognomy are but simply remarkable. The female figure standing gracefully has her coiffure arranged in the *dhamilla* style. She has been putting on a beaded necklace. Her drapery has been rendered flowing gracefully (Fig. 27).

Two more images of Kārttikeya have also been obtained from Muṇḍeśvarī. They are now preserved in the Patna Museum. Both the figures represent the god within a *chaitya* arch seated on the peacock and carrying a spear by the right hand. One of the representations[1] is highly artistic. The peacock has its plumage outstretched forming a halo at the back of the deity. The sculptures retain the refinement of the Gupta modelling and are much akin to the figure of the god from Bhumrā.[2]

One of the finest images of Kārttikeya of this period is presently installed in the Harikatora temple at Basarh.[3] The deity is seated on the back of his mount, the peacock, with its wings spread out sideways. Both the legs of the god are pendent. The deity is bare bodied with a *dhotī* tied over. He has a sufficiently long spear held in his left hand and a citrus fruit (*mātuluṅga*) in the right hand. He puts on his special chest ornament and a peculiar type of head-dress. A plain circular halo encircles the head. The sculpture is characterised by fine modelling, sweetness of facial expression, brevity of ornaments and above all the naturalness of the figure. The sculpture may be dated in the 7th century A.D.

Mention may also be made of the image of Kārttikeya recovered from a well on the top of the Shahkund Hill,[4] situated about 13 kms. south of Sultanganj in the Bhagalpur district. The god has been shown seated astride to front, on back of his mount, the peacock, whose both the wings are outspread sideways. He is two

1. Sinha, C.P., *Early Sculptures of Bihar*, fig.61.
2. *MAS* I. 16, pl. XII. b.
3. Sahai, B., *Iconography of Minor Hindu and Buddhist Dieties*, fig. 20.
4. *Bihar District Gazetteer* (Bhagalpur District), Pl. IX.

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armed, holding a spear by its lower and by his left hand and a citrus fruit (*mātuluṅga*) by his right hand. He puts on his typical *baghanakhā* necklace. The halo is circular. On stylistic consideration, this image may be dated in the 7th century A.D.

One of the panels attached to the Brahmanical temple at Nalanda[1] from site No. 2 shows the figure of Kārttikeya. The two-armed god has been shown standing with a slight bend in his body, holding the *śakti* by the left hand. The peacock in the right corner is trying to peck at the fruit held in the right hand of its master. There is also a male figure seated in left corner who may have been a devotee. The image is dated in the 7th century A.D.

From Benisagar in the district of Singhbhum has also come the figure of Karttikeya presently preserved in the Varendra Research Society Museum at Rajashahi.[2] Carved out of somewhat rough sandstone, the sculpture represents the two armed god with his speeial emblem the spear held in his right hand and seated in *lalita-sana* on his mount, the peacock. This sculpture as well belongs to the post-Gupta period.

Kārttikeya no doubt continued to be worshipped even after the Gupta and post-Gupta periods, but his images are few and far between during the Pāla period.

There is an image of Kārttikeya from Bodhgaya now housed in the Patna Museum.[3] The god sits in the *ardhaparyaṅka* pose with the right leg pendent and the left one shown folded and placed on the seat. He is two armed holding a *mātuluṅga* by his right hand and his special emblem the spear (*śakti*) by his left hand. His *vāhana*, the peacock is shown seated below his seat facing towards the right. Stylistically it may be dated in the early Pāla period in c.8th century A.D.

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1. *JUPHS*, Vol. XXIII, p.206, Sinha, C.P, *op.cit.* fig.62.
2. *A Catalogue of the Archaeological Relics in the Museum of theVRS, Rajshahi*, No. C1/181.
3. Patna Museum, Arch. No.154.

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An elegantly carved black stone image of Kārttikeya is displayed in the Museum of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology, Patna University. The exact provenance of the sculpture is unknown, but presumably it may have hailed from some part of Bihar. It represents the god six faced (*ṣaḍānana*) and four-armed. He is holding a rosary (*akṣāmāla*) in the front left hand and a water vessel (*kamaṇḍalu*) in the front right hand. He has also a small spear (treated more like an arrow) in the back right hand and a bow in the back left hand. He is shown seated cross legged on a somewhat raised pedestal, on the frontage of which is carved a beautiful figure of peacock with both its wings outstretched sideways and tail-feathers displayed in the form of a fan. Stylistically the sculpture is a late work and it can safely be assigned to the 13th-14th century A.D. (Fig. 28).

Not only Kārttikeya, even his female counterpart, known as Kumārī or Kārttikeyāni has also been represented in the art of Bihar. She has very often been represented along with the seven divine Mothers (Saptamātṛkās) though her separate images are also not unknown. The Patna Museum is in possession of a group of sculptures depicting Saptamātṛkās from Seraikela in the Singhbhum district and Pachar in the Gaya district. Seraikela Kaumārī is having a spear in her right hand and the playful child on her lap carrying some object in her hand. Stylistically the image belongs to the pre-Pāla period and may be dated in the 6th-7th century A.D.

An image of Kaumārī from Pachar[1] represents her seated exactly like Kārtikeya (Kumāra) in *ardhaparyaṅka* pose with her right leg pendent and the left one folded and placed on the seat. She is two armed holding a *mātuluṅga* (citras fruit) by her right hand and a spear in her left hand. Stylistically it may be dated in circa 7th century A.D.

The Patna Museum has also a fine image of Kārttikeyānī, the Śakti of Kārttikeya, found from Colgong in the district of Bhagal-

1. Patna Museum Arch. No 10643.

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pur. Carved out of black basalt, the goddess has been shown standing. Slightly stooping to the right, she is displaying the *varada-mudrā* by her right hand. Her left hand raised to the level of her chest is holding something indistinct. To her proper right near her leg is the figure of her mount, the peacock, looking up towards her mistress with great devotion. The face of the goddess is lit up with divine purity and tranquility.[1] (Fig. 29).

Recently one more sculpture representing the female counterpart of Kārttikeya has been discovered from the Bhagalpur district from excavations at Antichak, about 13 kms. from Colgong, supposed to be the most probable site of the Vikramaśīla Mahāvihāra of the time of the Pāla ruler Dharmapāla (8th Cent. A.D.). The goddess is represented as seated astride her *vāhana* the peacock. (Fig. 30).

NANDĪ—

Nandī as the Great Bull is said to be the vehicle of Śiva. Śiva loves to ride on his bull who has become a member of the Lord's family. Respect for Nandī seems to have been great in Bihar also which indicates that even the *vāhana* of Śiva had a great place in the Śiva *sampradāya*. The artists of Bihar prepared not only the images of Śiva and other Śaiva deities but also the images of Nandī. An image of Nandī discovered at Muṇḍeśvarī[2] is quite interesting. Carved out of sandstone, the bull sacred to Śiva is a notable example of the profound understanding of animal form. The bull is a typical example of the period. The expression on the face of the animal suggests utter freedom and fearleseness which are obviously the result of its association with the master. Nowhere has the delight in animal life been more richly recorded in sculpture than in India from the earliest known times. The figure is very remarkable and can be safely dated in

1. Sinha, B. P., *Bhārtīya Kalā Ko Bihāra Kī Dena*, p. 131, fig.101, Patna Museum, Arch. No. 103.
2. Sinha, C.P. *op. cit.*, p. 113, fig. 83.

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the post-Gupta period. Another figure of bull (Nandī) from Nalanda is now preserved in the Varendra Research Society Museum,[1] Rajashahi (Bangaladesh). On stylistic ground, it may be dated in C. 5th-6th century A.D.

A fine humped bull is carved on a seal discovered at Basarh.[2] The *vāhana* of Śiva is shown facing to the left. That Śaśāṅka was a Śaiva is clear from his coins on which we find the bull. the moon and Śiva. On his seal-matrix[3] found in Sasaram in the Rohtas district, there is the bull on the upper part of the seal.

A number of Nandī images have been found from different parts of Bihar during the Pāla period. Mention may be made of the stone sculpture of Nandī discovered from Birpur[4] in the district of Begusarai. The image, as it is, does not seem to form a part of any big image but is an independent one. The face of the Nandī has generally been shown looking upwards in sculptures. The present image is of a seated variety. Nandī ts wearing a necklace of bells and other ornaments. We learn from the Pañchobh copper plate of Saṁgrāmagupta,[5] a feudatory of the Karnāṭas of Mithilā, that the bull was the insignia of that family, as Saṁgrāmagupta himself was a devout worshipper of Maheśvara.

1. *Report on the working of the Varendra Research Museum.* 1969, p.28, (Museum No. 2899).
2. *ASI*, 1913-14, pl.126, seal No.63.
3. Fleet, *CIX*, Vol. III, p.283.
4. *JBRS*, Vol. , p.373.
5. *IHQ*, XXXIII, pp.288-94.

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CONCLUSION

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To conclude, Śiva, one of the members of the Brahmanical triad, is a deity of considerable interest and great popularity. Judging from literary, numismatic, epigraphic and sculptural evidences as well as by the actual remains of his temples, he seems to have been extremely popular from a fairly early times. Siva was no doubt an important deity as early as the third millennium B.C. in the Indus Valley. But we do not have evidence of Śiva's worship in Bihar in so remote a past. However, literature coupled with archaeological evidences point to the worship of the god in North India right from the later Vedic period when Rudra was transformed, rather gradually merged into the concept of Śiva. Śiva comes to acquire a dominant position in the Epic period. He is both benevolent as wall as terrific.

In the *Vājasneyi Saṁhitā*, Rudra is attributed the names of Tryaṁbaka and Śiva, two very important epithets of Rudra-Śiva in the post-Vedic times. In the great Epic, the Vedic Rudra is very evidently transformed into Śiva. In the *Rāmāyaṇa* he is known by the names of Mahādeva, Śambhu, Tryaṁbaka and Bhūtapati There are copious references to Śiva in the *Mahābhārata* suggesting him to be a very popular deity. Evan Kṛṣṇa is represented in the Epic as having gone to the Himalayas to propitiate Śiva to have a son for Jambavatī.[1] The *Mahābhārata* has also the very famous story of struggle between Arjuna and Śiva in the form of Kirāta who, on being pleased, presents Arjuna his Pāśupata weapon.

1. *Mahābhārata*, Anuśāsaṇa parvan, 14.5 pp.

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The great grammarian Pāṇinī in his *Aṣṭādhyāyi* records several names of the god, such as Bhava, Śarva, Rudra and Mṛḍa. Though Śiva has not been included here, Pāṇinī's *Sūtra Śivasishyam* referes indirectly to the followers or worshippers of the god. The *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali also refers to the image of Śiva along with Skanda and Viśākha being made for worship. The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya also alludes to the worship of the god in the time of the Mauryas. A very remarkable gold plaque of Śiva and Pārvatī from Pāṭaliputra belongs to this period.

Coins and seals also attest to the popularity of the god. Coins of Ujjayini and those belonging to the Yaudheyas and Kunindas bear representations of the god on them. Certain of the tribal coins of the Audumbaras are found representing even Śaiva shrines and so also the coins of the Kuṣāṇa rulers bear the effigies of Śiva on them. In the post-Cupta period, Śaśāṅka is known to have issued gold coins representing on the obverse side the figure of Śiva along with the *vāhana*, the Bull. Symbolic and theriomorphic representations of Śiva are found on a number of seals obtained from places like Basarh, Baiskaran, Nalanda and Gaya in Bihar. All these are eloquent proofs of Śiva's popularity in the state of Bihar.

Remains of the temples of Śiva belonging to the Gupta and early-medieval periods have been discovered from the different parts of the state, suggesting thereby that the god was widely worshipped in this state during the Gupta and the later periods. A large number of sculptures depicting the god in various forms bear ample testimony to worship of the god in numerous forms. Even Śiva has been represented dancing vigorously. His terrific aspect Bhairava has also been rendered dancing in a remarkable image from Gaya.

Inscriptions point to the spread of the Pāśupata sect of Śaivism in Bihar. Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* is an earliest proof of the existence of the sect as early as in the Maurya-Śuṅga period. That this Śaiva sect held its ground in the land of Bihar is amply attested by the

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Bhagalpur grant of Nārāyaṇapāla. One of the images of Lakulīśa, the prepounder of the Pāśupata sect, found at Benisagar in the district of Singhbhum suggests that the cult of Lakulīśa-Pāśupata has penetrated as far the Adivasi (tribal) tract of South Bihar. Another Śaiva sect known by the name of Muṇḍī, who used to save their hair, is also known to have flourished during the period in Bihar as attested by Sarahapa.

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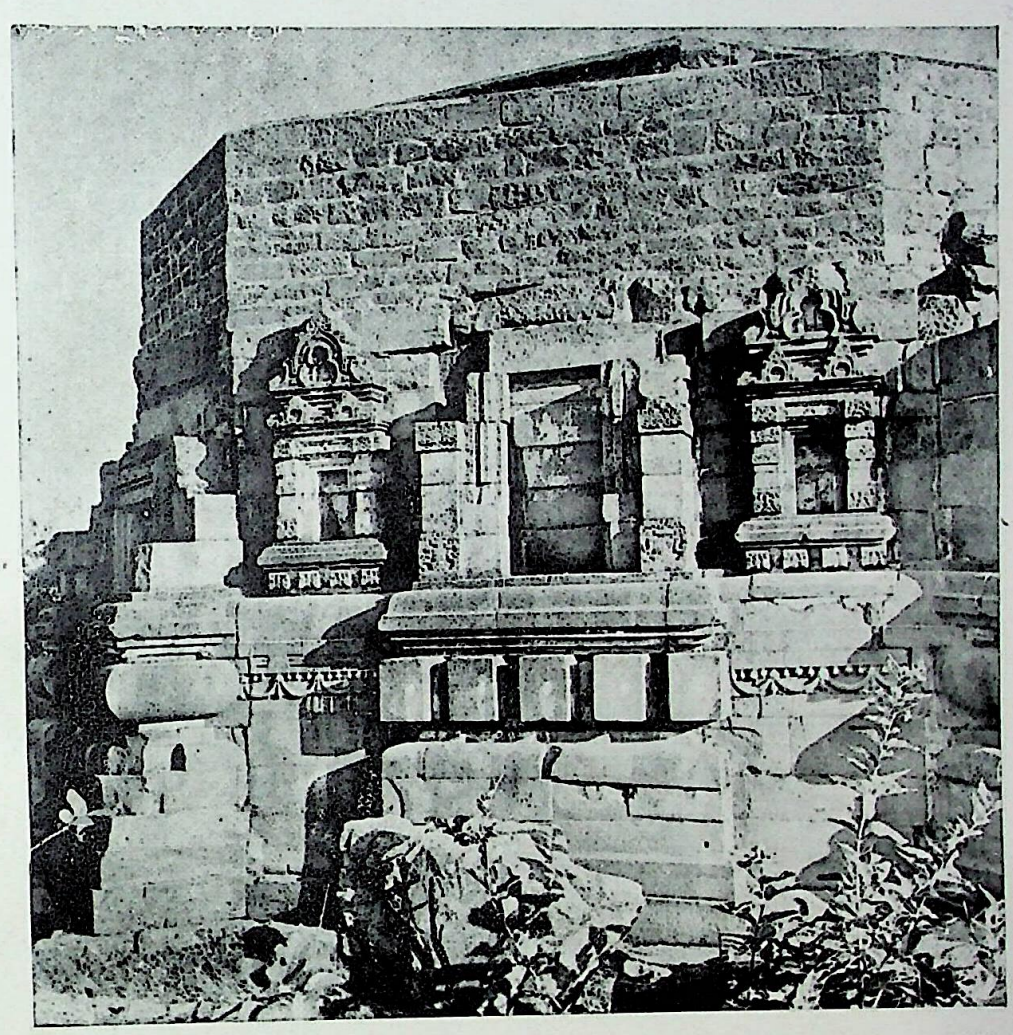

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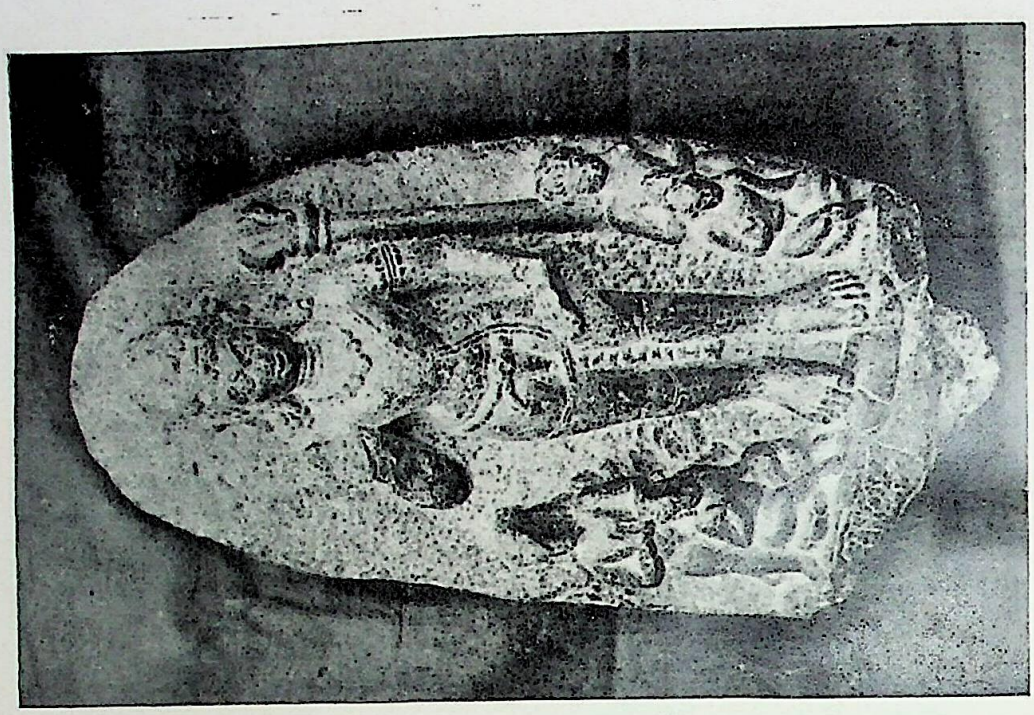

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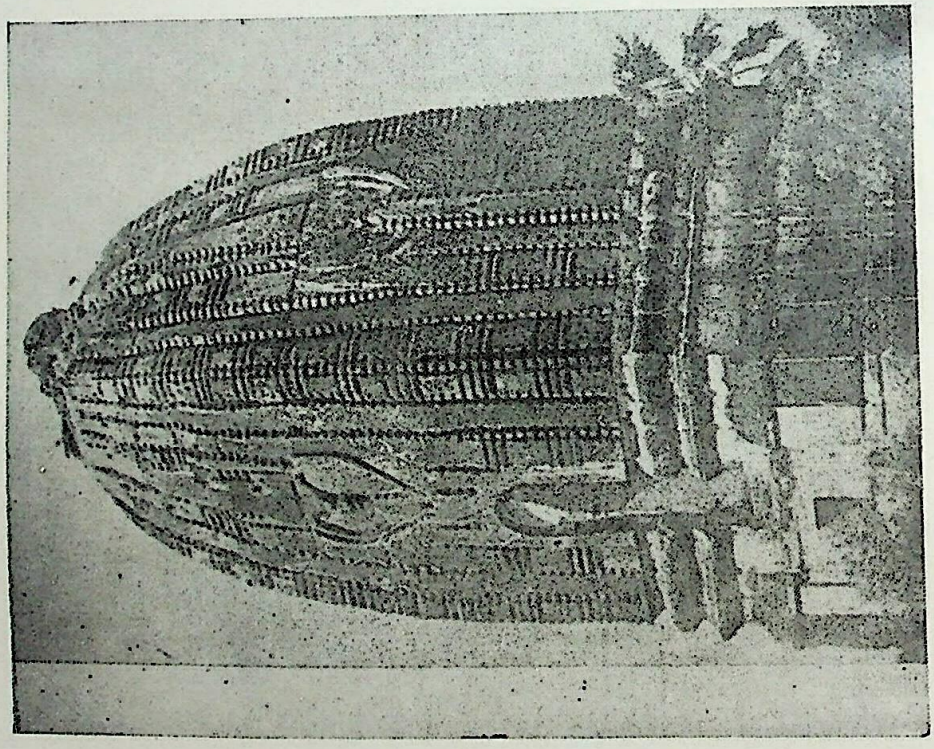

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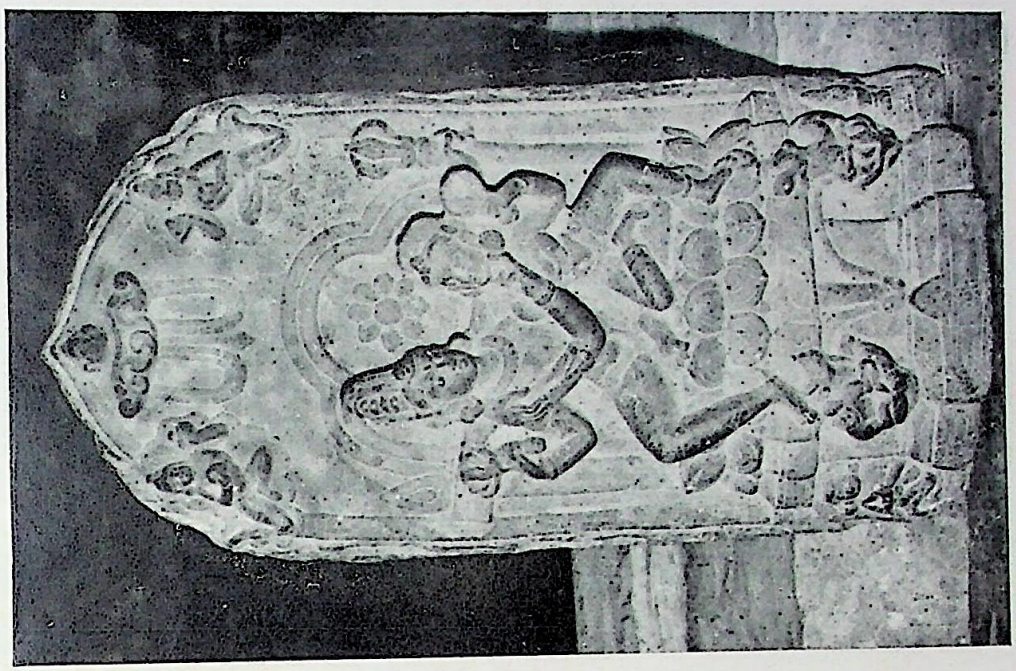

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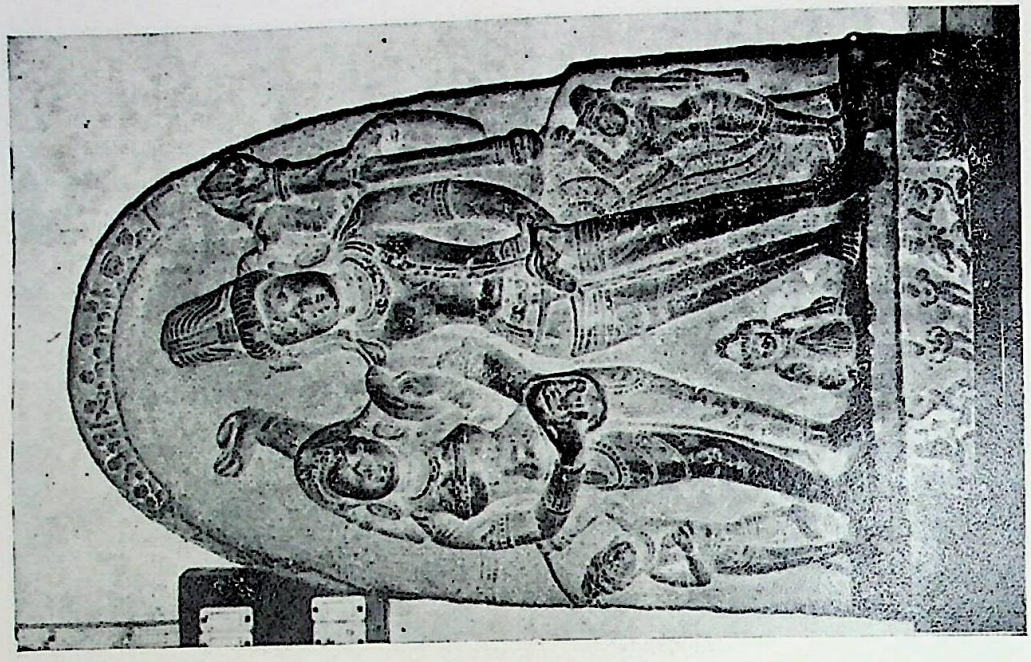

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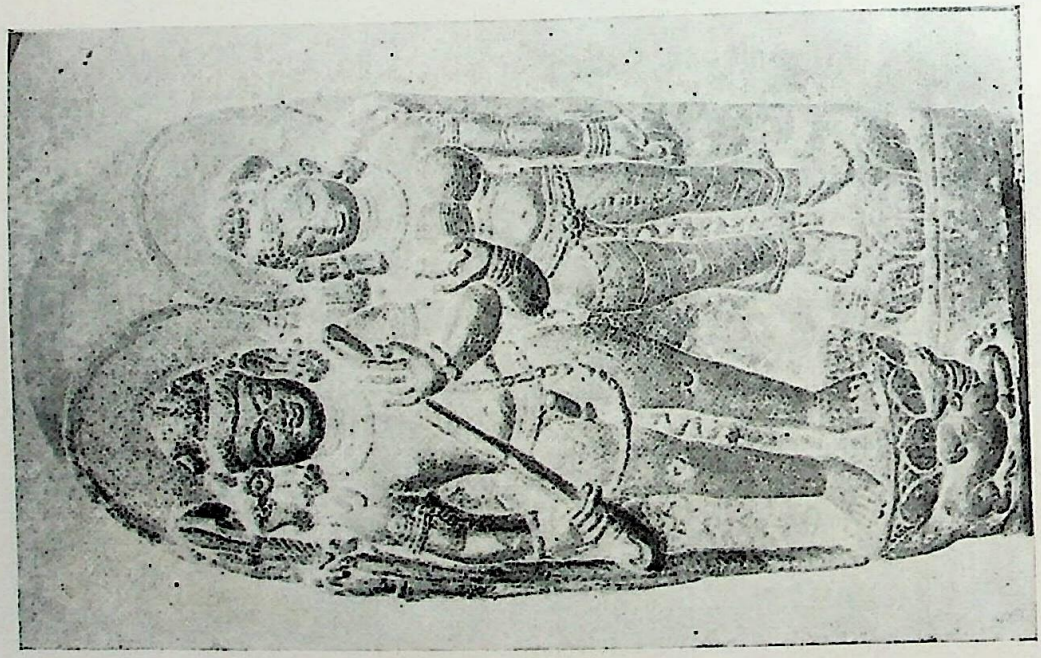

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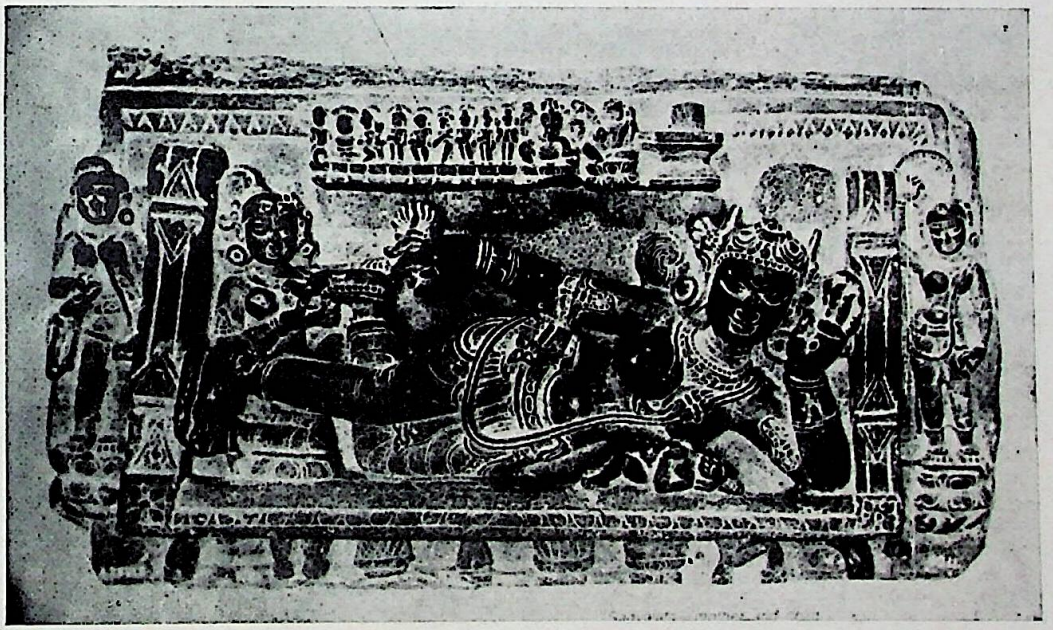

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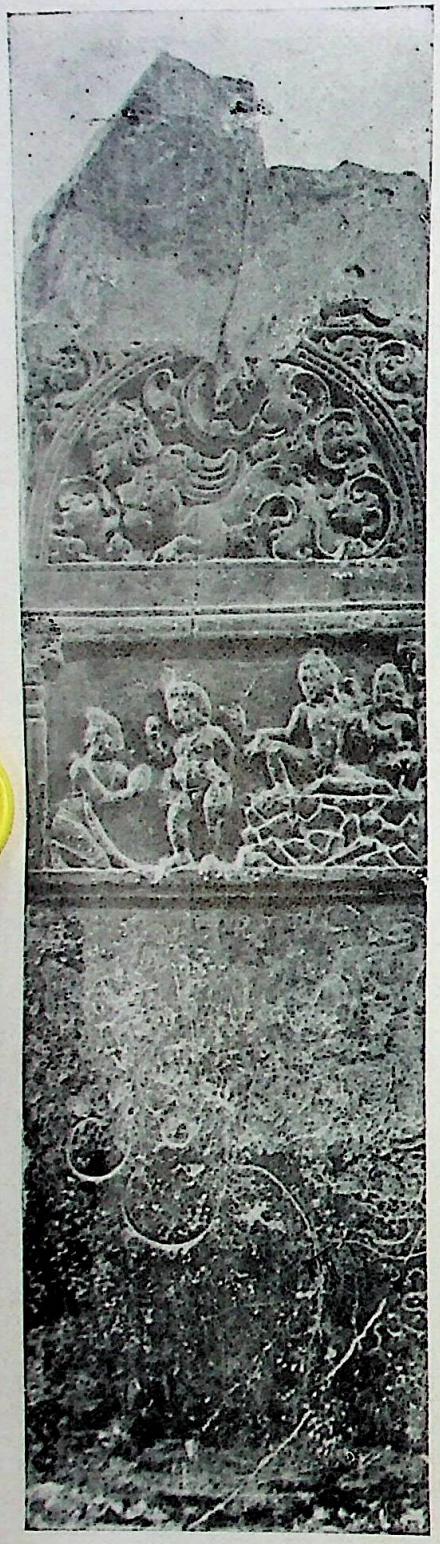

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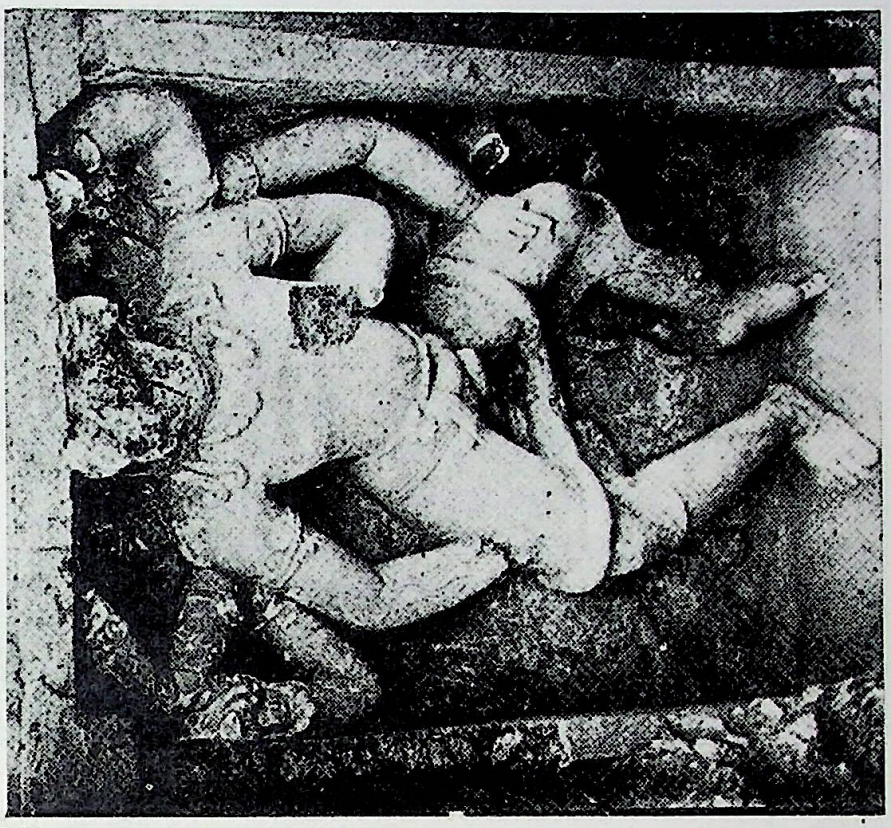

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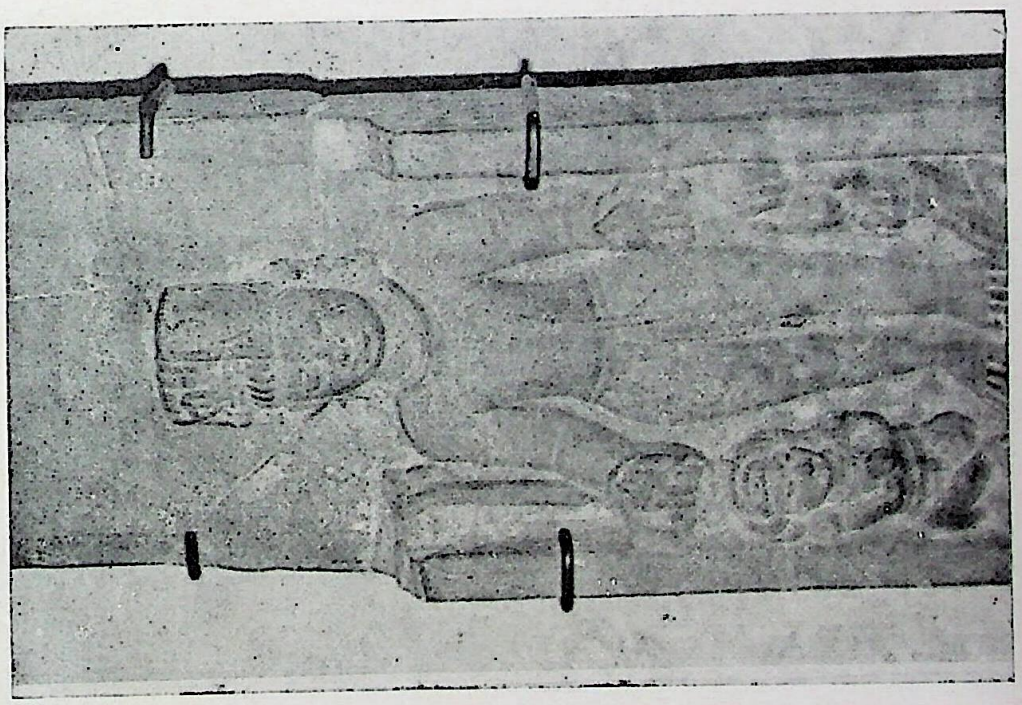

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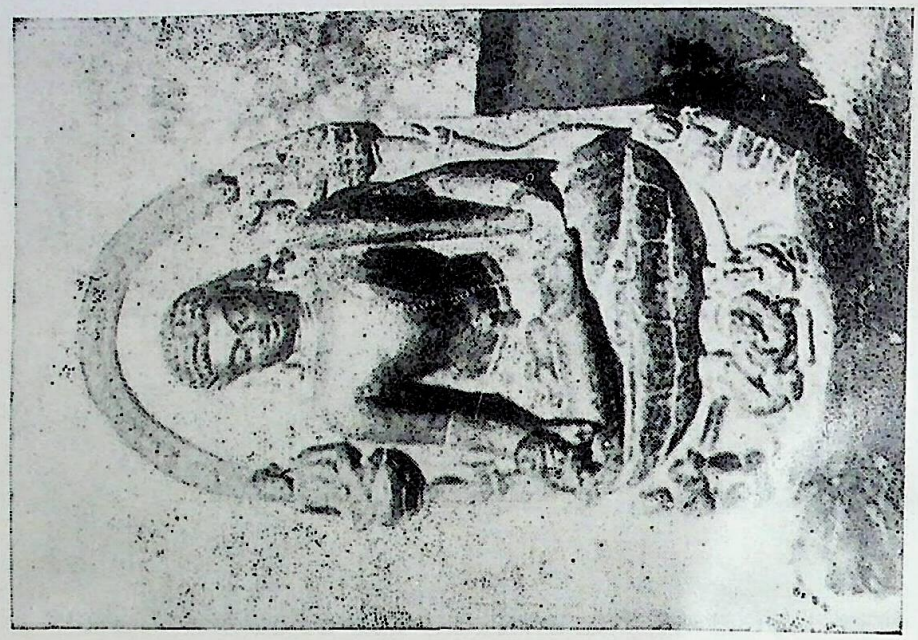

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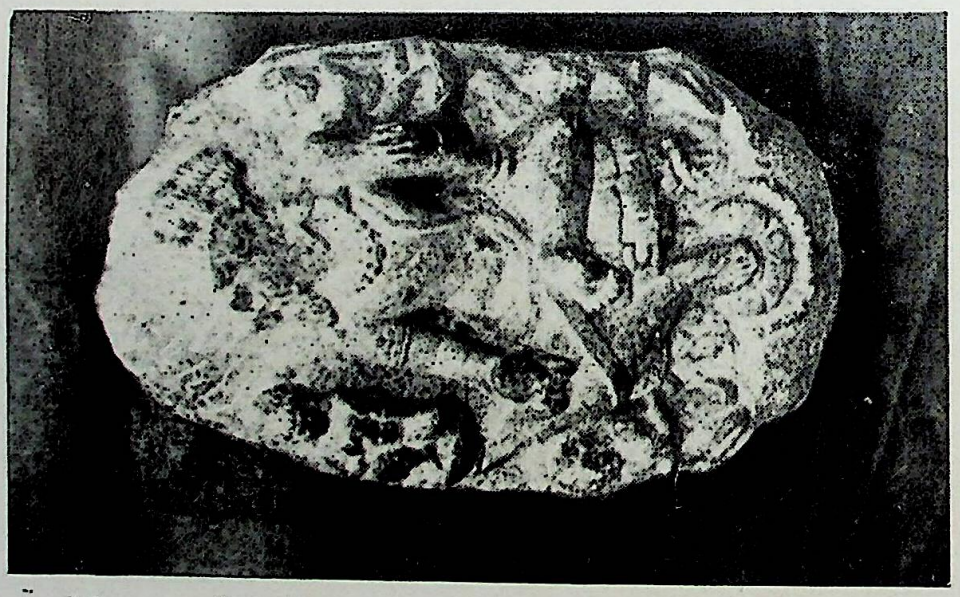

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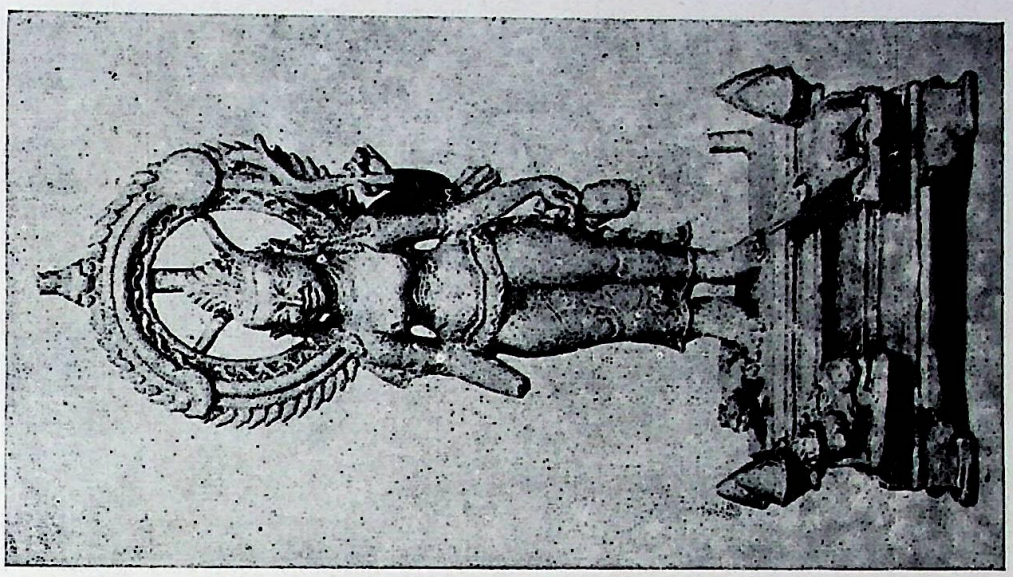

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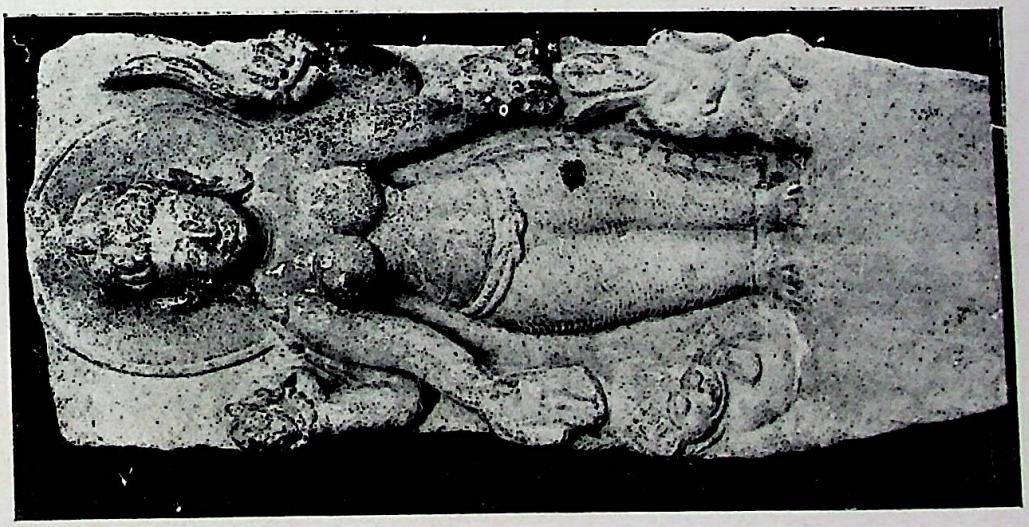

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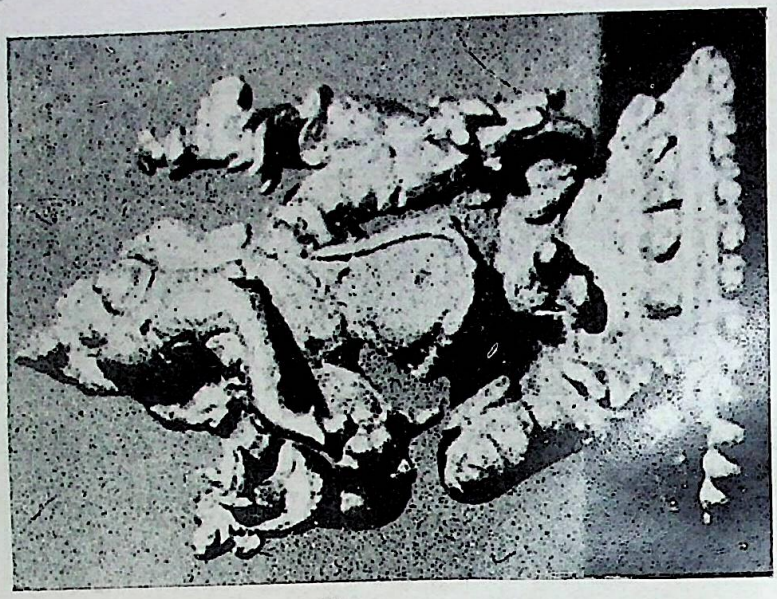

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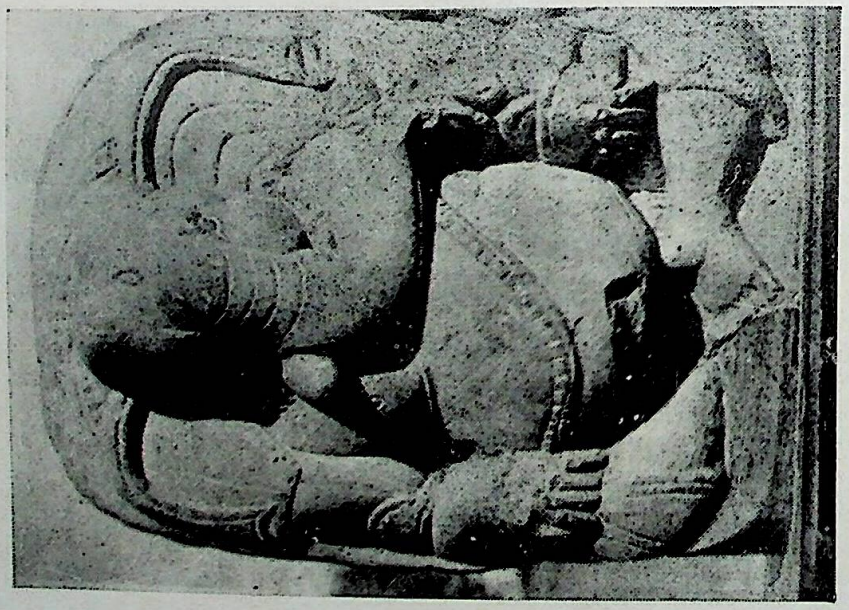

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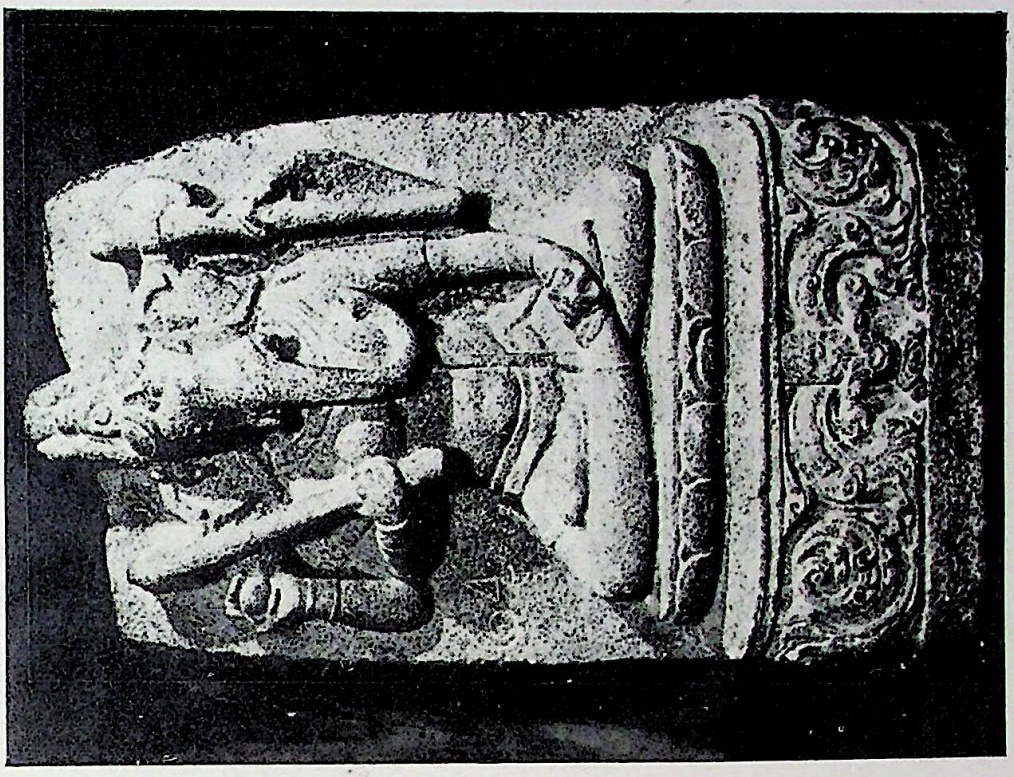

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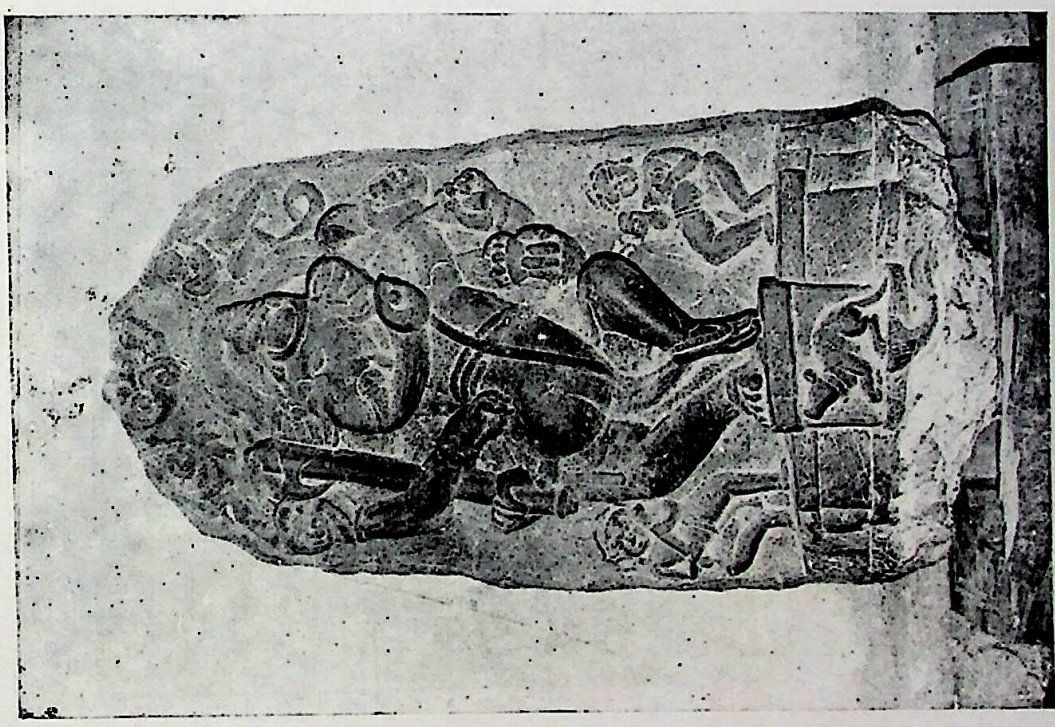

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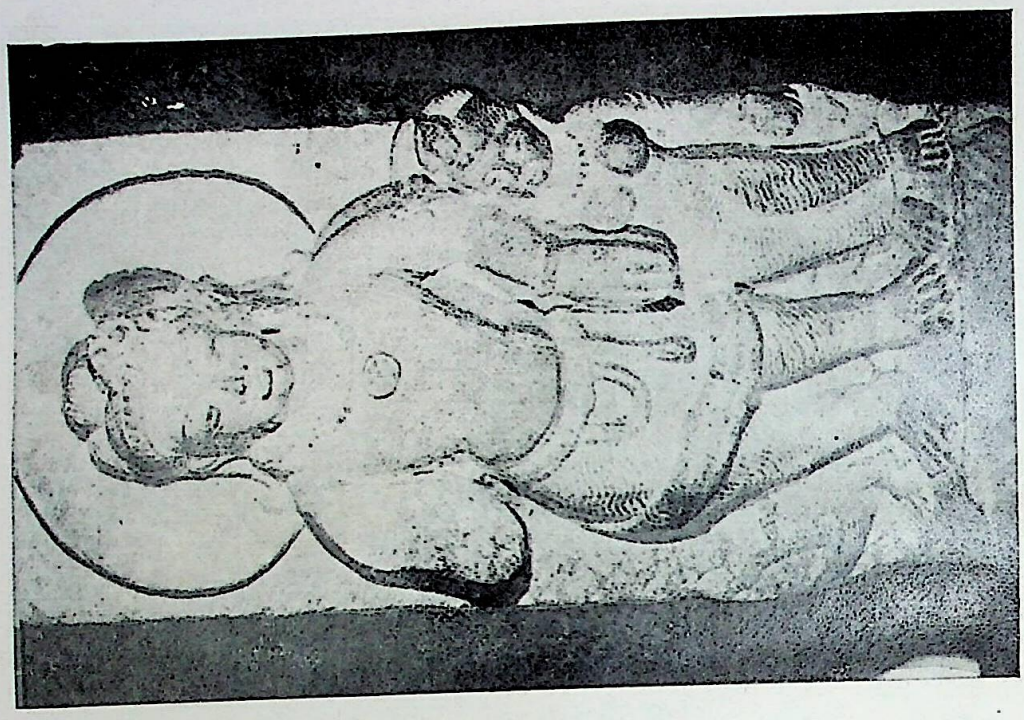

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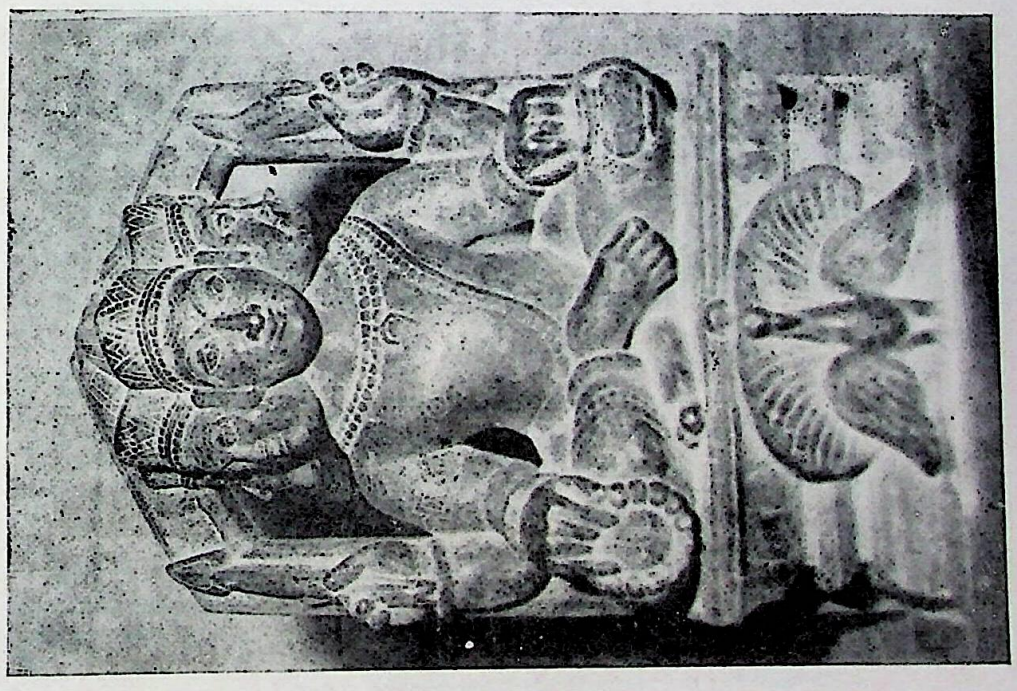

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Dr. Gayatri Akhouri (born 1950) did her M. A. and Ph. D. from the Patna University, She has to her credit a number of research articles published in the Research Journals of repute. Before joining the Government Girls' College, Gardanibagh, Patna in September, 1976, she served the J D Women's College, Patna as Lecturer in the Department of History. She is also a member of the Bihar Puravid Parished and other academic bodies.

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